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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Dr. Sheppard as Church Dictator.

In the *St. Martin's Review* for March 1934, Dr. H. R. L. Sheppard in reply to a challenge as to what he would do in the way of Church Reform if he were made Dictator of the Church of England for thirty days, lays before his readers the following programme :

1. I should write to the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the head of the Eastern Orthodox Church in England, and the President of the Free Church Council. To each I should say that it was impossible any longer to believe that the disciples of the Father God of Jesus Christ could be justified in upholding any ruling that denied to each the right of full hospitality in one another's Churches. I should ask each to permit me to come unheralded to their Mass or Communion and I should invite each to accept the hospitality of the Church of England in the same manner at St. Paul's Cathedral. Would the leaders respond? One certainly would, another might, and the third would almost certainly not. But it is time that Christians despaired of their religion if it may not pursue the right course for fear of a rebuff to its prestige. I have never been able to understand the mentality of those who would bid their Church refrain from a good work for fear lest it meet with no response or give offence.

2. I should rock the foundations of the Establishment by declaring that the disciples of Jesus Christ may on no account take any lot or part in killing their brethren, white, brown or black. I should stand here on what I conceive to be the Spirit of Jesus Christ and I should refuse utterly and entirely to compromise. I might even add that I would rather see a great nation go down into the dust of history by taking the risk of complete disarmament for conscience sake, than wax greater in the glory of this world.

3. Since I believe in the Establishment of Christianity as firmly as I disbelieve in the Establishment of the Church of England, I should visit the Prime Minister and ask leave, in consultation with others, to nominate a commission to consider how the existing Establishment could be enlarged and adjusted so that every approved Christian

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Church, if willing, could share with the Church of England the task of confirming and encouraging the nation in the Christian Faith. I should be prepared to pool the Church's endowments in the interests of other denominations, and if the loss of them enabled the new Establishment to be entirely free to manage its own directly spiritual affairs, upon the necessity of which I should insist, I should not gravely worry to what financial stress the Church was temporarily reduced. Disendowment, part or entire, would not disturb my rest. I should hope that the larger Church that would arise would contain within its ranks a sufficient number of large-minded Christians, who would do for it what the House of Commons has often done for the Church of England in the matter of saving it from the narrowness and bigotry which are often enough the bane of sectional religion.

4. As a token that the Church of England has come to realise that the beginning and end of the Christian religion is the following of Jesus Christ in incorruptness, and that this may be achieved through other Churches as well as its own, I should put in hand legislation that would remove from the Enabling Act that most unhappy declaration required of voters for the Church Assembly, that they do not belong to any other religious body. That barrier ought never to have been erected: the declaration requires immediate repeal.

With the first and fourth items of Church Reform our readers will know we are in hearty agreement. As for the second, or pacificist item, while we can but affirm our deep respect for Dr. Sheppard's convictions and admire the courage with which he maintains them, we are unable to agree, although we love peace and loathe bloodshed. We do believe, however, in the dangerous doctrine of the consecration of force, and that where the rational, moral, and spiritual consciousness is unable to restrain men from violence and injustice, force may, and ought, to be used as much in their interests as in the interests of humanity at large. This may seem like canting hypocrisy to Dr. Sheppard and as certainly sub-Christian; but here we stand and we cannot do otherwise.

The obligation, however, to do all we can to prevent war, to promote friendship among the nations, to reduce armaments, is the more incumbent on those who hold our views than on those who are by conviction pacificists. For it seems to us that the right use of force must make greater demands on the rational and moral consciousness than the refusal to use force. If force can be used in such a way as not to deprive those against whom it is used of life and limb, so much the better, and therefore to the pacificist programme which seeks to prevent war altogether should be added, what so many pacificists seem opposed to—the serious endeavour to humanize warfare by limiting in every pos-

sible way its destructiveness and suffering. We know that in countries where the policy of restricting in all sorts of judicious ways the evils of intoxicating drinks has been carried out, it has proved, out of all proportion, more successful than the policy which aimed at the total abolition of intoxicants.

The third item of Church Reform is for us something of a mixed magnitude. With Dr. Sheppard we are strongly in favour of re-establishment on a comprehensive basis and would support the pooling 'of the Church's endowments in the interests of other denominations' should it be necessary for the realization of the scheme. Even if the re-established Church, with all its inclusive denominations, comprised the whole nation, which unfortunately would not be the case, we are in grave doubt as to the possibility of giving the new establishment complete independence, if that is what Dr. Sheppard means by 'entirely free to manage its own directly spiritual affairs.' Parliament, it seems to us, would have to authorize the constitution of the re-established Church and its terms of membership, and would have always to be appealed to in order to sanction any alteration or reform in that constitution. Moreover, members of the re-established Church would have, as English citizens, the right to appeal to the law courts to secure Church administration in accordance with the terms of the Church's constitution.

Of course, subject to these limitations, freedom for the Church to manage its own affairs could be granted, but whether it would not be in the interest of the management of those affairs for the Church to delegate some of its functions to civil tribunals is the practical question. For instance, in the appointment of bishops, can the ancient rights of the laity be better preserved or their wishes better expressed than by the Prime Minister appointing to vacant sees? Or can the rights of the clergy be more securely preserved than by the judgments of our civil courts?

We think Dr. Sheppard will agree with us that the word 'spiritual,' on account of its ambiguity, is not a good word to use in this connection. It is better to adhere to the terms ecclesiastical and civil, which are much superior to the terms spiritual and temporal. The problem is how to secure, without Dr. Sheppard as Dictator, intercommunion, re-establishment and the removal of the negative clause in our Church membership de-

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claration. At present the majority of our hierarchy does not seem to be enthusiastically in favour of these reforms, but that should not daunt those who know that the Reformation of the Church of England was secured with the majority of the Episcopate against it, and all great measures of ecclesiastical reform in England, as we propose to show in a subsequent issue, have only been secured by the initiative of the State in opposition to the majority of the Hierarchy.

THE ANGLO-CATHOLIC FUTURE.

Mr. Kenneth Ingram, the Editor of *The Green Quarterly*, an illustrated review which stresses the symbolic, dramatic, and aesthetic aspects of Anglo-Catholicism, contributes to the *Guardian* of March 23rd a significant article on the future of Anglo-Catholicism. He discusses as the result of the recent union of the Anglo-Catholic Congress with the English Church Union whether the more extreme element has not seized the reins in the leadership of the Anglo-Catholic party. His test in this matter is not the ritual test, but the thinking and teaching test. He writes :

> 'The more serious test of the kind of influence which Anglo-Catholicism will prove to be is of a doctrinal and intellectual character. In this sphere we can discover two very different elements. There are those who take a rigid view as to the authority of the Church, and who are therefore determined not to yield an inch of the position which the Church in the past has taken up in regard to both doctrinal and moral questions. They desire to see ecclesiastical authority as absolute in the Anglican Communion as it is in Rome. Consequently they suspect as "modernist" any critical investigation in the interpretation of Scripture or in theology, since this investigation, of its very nature, throws doubt on the claim that the Church has already spoken the final and unalterable word in such issues. Their standpoint is equally conservative as to moral controversies. Their attitude towards birth control and divorce is the same as that of Rome, and for the same reasons. Resolution XV of the last Lambeth Conference disclosed a rift in Anglo-Catholic ranks, and a rift which roughly distinguishes those who would reproduce the Roman system of absolute and static ecclesiastical authority from those who hold the second view. These wish to see Anglicanism producing a Liberal Catholicism, a Catholicism, that is to say, which, while taking its stand on fundamental principles and preserving a sense of continuity, is not so bound to tradition that it is unable to revise and develop its outlook on doctrinal and moral interpretations in the light of new knowledge.'

Mr. Ingram asks : Will the Liberal leaven predominate or be extinguished? He answers the question thus :

'My own impression is that it will gradually predominate. And that is what matters. The Anglican Church will be faced in the near future with a number of social and moral problems, as also with the problem of the disunity of Christendom. If those who are the literal descendants of the Tractarians and the High Church school were to prevail, the weight of Anglo-Catholic influence would be thrown against any effort to modify or develop the orthodox traditional standpoint. In any reunion overtures its policy towards non-episcopal Christians would be identical with that of the Roman Catholic attitude to Anglicans. In most of the issues on which the Church will be invited to decide, its influence would necessarily be obstructive.

'It is always dangerous to prophesy. But there are signs that the Anglo-Catholic Movement will tend to become more liberal in mentality. The older men lived in an atmosphere of continual opposition, and this is an environment which usually makes for the closed mind. Moreover, the younger generation are likely more and more to recognize that there is no *raison d'être* for an Anglican Catholicism if it is going merely to reproduce the Roman system. The publications of the E.C.U. Literature Committee have been markedly liberal in tone, while the popular propaganda of the Catholic Literature Association has been carefully dissociated from obscurantist commitments. At present no one who is directing Anglo-Catholic policy wants to precipitate internal dissensions. But, when the clash comes, it is almost certain that it is the liberal element which will be found to occupy the key positions.'

This verdict, at which the *Church Times* is not unnaturally disgruntled, will not strike our readers as novel. Coming from one of Mr. Ingram's experience, it carries weight. For some years past Church promotions have been surely but silently separating the sheep from the goats, and when the hour of crisis comes in the not distant future, it will be seen that the Church of England, in no very heroic or dramatic way, is on the side of comprehensiveness, moral evolution, dogmatic re-interpretation and re-statement. With the rapidly increasing ascendancy of the Roman Church in England and the not less significant advances of Secularism, this is the only sound policy open to her. Though let this be said to her credit, she will choose it not from considerations of policy but of principle. Our leaders may be timid, but they are conscientious.

Mr. Ingram makes the interesting suggestion that the ritual extremists among Anglo-Catholics are really more ready to accept a liberal Church policy and the modernization of dogma and ethics than are those whose ritual is less extreme. It is therefore among the Anglo-Catholic Congress element, rather than among the English Church Union element, that we must look for liberal Catholics according to Mr. Ingram.

An Episcopal Condemnation of Fanaticism.

As the following statement by the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich on ecclesiastical controversy, which appeared in his *Diocesan Gazette* for February, is deserving of the widest publicity, we re-publish it here :

'So far as I can see no protest of the character on behalf of what is held to be the truth has ever done or could ever do anything but harm to the cause it is intended to serve, and that for more reasons than one. To begin with the persons who genuinely approve the protest are those who share the views of the protester. These are rallied to a stronger sense of protest, a more rigid and unyielding temper, they are fortified in a more partial and partizan attitude, and correspondingly in those who do not share those views but who take a real interest in the issue there is apt to be stirred a sense of resentment, provoking them to a less calm and impartial consideration of the subject than it demands. On both sides therefore there is encouraged a temper the least suited to the ascertainment of what is true and of what is proper to be approved or censured.

'This is particularly unfortunate in connection with the Christian religion, for here truth of the character we are considering, religious truth, is important not merely for its own sake but because if sincerely held it results in truth of life. For the Christian it is the Christian life that is of prime importance, or perhaps it would be still more accurate to say the Christian spirit, because out of the Christian spirit the Christian life springs. What we do is more important than what we think or hold, what we are is most important of all, and although it is clear that all these things, knowing or believing, acting, being, react on one another, yet always it is possible to distinguish between the Christian spirit and the conduct that springs from it and the particular truth, or it may be interpretation of a statement of truth that is held. This is so obvious that there are numbers of first-class Christians whose lives betoken their genuine possession of the Christian spirit, who differ widely in the particular Christian doctrines they hold or on the particular interpretation they give to those doctrines. This is only to say that in its essence true Christianity is a relation to our Lord and a life lived in the endeavour to follow Him in the power of His spirit, and it is obviously consistent with a considerable range of variety in creed.

'It is on this ground mainly that the history of Christian controversy presents such a deplorable story and has provoked so much contemptuous criticism, and it has done the cause of Christianity much injury. Take for example the account of the great Councils of the Church. Whatever they may have won for the cause of Christian truth seems to me to have been far outweighed by the illustrations they have afforded of the failure of the Christian spirit. What a tragic picture they present of personal animosity or of bitter antagonism of harsh and utterly un-Christian temper! It is this failure in Christian temper, in the Christian spirit, that has been mainly responsible for the relatively small success that Christianity has had in human affairs. This is of course because Christianity has been working in a society of fallible men with the imperfections and faults of which human nature is susceptible. True, but the whole purpose of Christianity is to overcome these, and one of the lessons to learn is, as it seems to me, that we

do infinitely more harm to our cause by the insistence on a rigid line of interpretation of Christian doctrine and by protests on behalf of it than would ever attend a more liberal acceptance of the views of those with whom we differ. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love buildeth up. If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not yet as he ought to know; but if any man loveth God, the same is known of him." There is no real difference between the nature of religious truth and the method of its apprehension and of any other kind of truth. The way of patient research, of persistent endeavour, of weighing the force of criticism, of accepting it or meeting it by other assurances — the scientific temper and mind are as essential to the truth of religion as they are to truth anywhere and everywhere. Protests and professions, the "I believe," never win anything.

'The next thing that I want to say is that it seems to me so mistaken a line to assume that the doctrines and observances of the English Church are to be our guide or have any real bearing on our relations with other Christian bodies. Our attitude in this respect is partly a relic of and partly an unfortunate and mistaken inference from the time when there was only one organized Christian Church. We have travelled far from those days, and whatever the future may have in store in the way of Christian union we are quite unlikely ever to arrive at a similar state of affairs to that which once existed. Our regulations and our definitions are for ourselves; they have nothing to say and in many respects have no bearing on our relations with members of other Christian denominations.

'That is where we have so often made mistakes and still tend to. To refuse to recognize frankly the legitimate position of those whose beliefs and services are not on all fours with our own is it seems to me quite foreign to the spirit of a true Christianity. The position is the more remarkable because of the vast range of view that is found within the Church of England itself, probably much wider than exists between a considerable section of Churchmen and many Nonconformist bodies. It looks as though we were stressing the outward form rather than the inward spirit, whereas we ought to be doing exactly the opposite. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life," has surely a very evident application here. To raise our own forms of words and regulations to the point of making them essential marks of a true Christianity is altogether mistaken and futile and our relations with other Christian bodies should be determined on quite other considerations than these.

'That does not mean that those who hold official positions in the Church of England may do as they like; but it does mean that what is legitimate and what is expedient cannot be determined by a reference to what is lawful by the standards and regulations the observance of which is required within the Church of England itself. To base our relations with members of other Christian denominations on these and to demand them as a condition of our fellowship with them is to limit those relations quite unreasonably, and is, it seems to me, quite indefensible in these days.

'A further point I want to refer to is that within the Church of England there are two schools of thought, by no means synonymous with the ordinarily recognized parties, whose outlook is widely different from one another's. One group looks back, bases its convictions on the past, accepts what authority has claimed and cherishes the thought contained in the expression, "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." The other group questions a good deal what that

phrase may be held to imply. Its outlook is definitely forward. It has a firm faith in the progress of the truth and in the attainment of its spirit. It feels sure that there is an immense amount to be learnt as to what is the truth of God and probably a good many errors to be shed, to be learnt of Christianity and its application to the ever fresh experiences of changing human life. The two groups may be termed the "traditionalists" and the "progressionists" or "modernists," if to this last term is given its proper signification.

'Now the traditionalists have always laid stress upon the importance of Christian unity and have urged those whose views have differed from them to acknowledge its importance and by all means to maintain it, and the modernists have been ready to admit the force of the appeal. But if this is to be helpful for the future of the Church it can only be by a very considerable degree of liberty being given to each group to adopt such relations with bodies outside the Church of England as it thinks well. No doubt this does involve sometimes a position of considerable difficulty. It is hard to recognize as on an equally good footing a group of men with whose outlook and general line of teaching you cannot agree, but it is equally hard for both, and probably equally good for both that they should be called upon to do it.

'Meanwhile the earth moves on, freedom has its great and its noble claim, and truth is a bigger thing than any of us apprehends. We shall further its cause best by simply developing it as we can, urging from time to time such considerations as seem to us of force and leaving the issue to work itself out under the guidance of the Divine Spirit of truth. Especially shall we be doing this as we cultivate and exhibit the tolerance and meekness and what a great writer called the "sweet reasonableness" of Jesus Christ.'

It is gratifying for those who believe episcopal government to be of the *bene esse* of the Church, to have evidence from time to time that there is solid justification for their conviction.

The Wit and Wisdom of Crockford.

We doubt if any piece of work is done more efficiently in the Church of England than the editing and production of Crockford.[1] The latest edition maintains the high standard of its predecessors. The solidity of the mass of varied and accurate information which is contained in the two thousand odd pages of the body of the work is relieved by the searching criticism, pungent comment, and laconic humour, of the editorial Preface.

The Editor is no believer in the Church Assembly whether it be its constitution or its measures. Citing a 'distinguished Bishop' he writes :

'The annual meetings for the election of the Parochial Church Council are often almost farcical . . . This distressing unreality at the basis of the autonomous system strikes an incapacitating weakness

[1] *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, sixty-third issue, 1934. Published by Mr. Milford, Oxford University Press. 42/- net (India paper, 63/- net).

throughout the whole system. The legislation of the Church Assembly proceeds on the assumption that the Parochial Church Councils are genuinely representative bodies, and that they have behind them at least the authority of the constituencies who are supposed to elect them. But if these constituencies exist only on paper, and if in fact the elections are farcical, it is apparent that the measures passed by the Assembly will have small chance of working successfully in the parishes.'

The Editor regards appeals, whether episcopal or parsonic, to the electors to do their duty as a waste of time and energy. He writes :

'A large proportion of the Church-going laity are not interested in the business, and it is not easy to see how their enthusiasm is to be aroused. We suspect that an incumbent who made Roll and Council, Assembly and Quota the staple of his sermons and conversation would soon find his congregation dwindling and doors closed against him . . . One of the phenomena which the historian of the future will note is the discredit into which Parliamentary Institutions fell during the first thirty-five years of the twentieth century. His studies may even lead him to wonder whether the attempt to graft a parody of them upon the constitution of the Church, which is alien from them in character and rests upon a different conception of the nature and source of authority, was really a triumph of constructive statesmanship. As far as we know no attempt to ascertain the opinion of the rank and file of the clergy was made before the scheme was thrust upon them.'

Another aspect of this system of government, and not a commendable one, is its costly character. The Editor remarks that

'Democratic government, even when it is neither corrupt nor inefficient, is expensive.'

Under the old system a great number of extra parochial church duties were performed in a very competent way by unpaid clergymen who devoted much of their leisure to the discharge of them. These duties are performed under the new system by well-paid lay officials.

Of the excessive and oppressive character of a number of the Assembly's well-intentioned measures the Editor writes :

'We incline to think that in future a clergyman of the Church of England who wishes to recover his own money to use as he thinks fit from any of the Boards and Officials, who will be about his path and about his bed from the hour of his ordination as deacon to the hour of his death, will find that the only course open to him is to turn Roman Catholic. Possibly this change of allegiance has sometimes been made for worse reasons.'

The Editor is a strong believer in maintaining the necessary independence of the clergy. He writes that during the discussion on the Benefices Measure

'a very prominent member of the House of Laity said that he ought to be able to change an unsatisfactory incumbent as easily as he can

> change an unsatisfactory doctor, solicitor, or cook. (Members of the learned professions will appreciate this classification.) It is, of course, open to him to do so already by going to live in another parish, or by attending another church. In these days of swift and inexpensive mechanical transport the adoption of the latter course would seldom be a matter of much difficulty. What he really meant was that he wished to be able to drive from office, disgrace, and ruin any clergyman whom he happened to dislike. We do not know what manner of man those who would treat the clergy in this fashion expect, or desire to attract to the Ministry, but we think it advisable that the clergy should be under no illusion as to what may be their portion if the strong legal bulwarks behind which at present they do their work, without respect of persons, should ever be destroyed or even seriously breached.'

Obviously, the sound policy is to train the clergy to use their privileges in a responsible, reasonable, and considerate manner, rather than to reduce those privileges because in some few cases they are misused by those who ought never to have been beneficed. Crockford approves, as do the majority of our bishops, of full publicity being given to the trial of clergymen in the consistory courts. He believes it assists the ends of justice and certainly it ought to increase, not reduce, respect for a Church which courageously washes all its dirty linen in public.

Our Editor has the courage not only to regard the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as a 'spiritual' court, but argues for its continuance, and informs his readers that since 1353, that is, nearly two centuries before the Reformation,

> 'the final appeal in matters ecclesiastical has always been to the Crown in some form. We think that the clergy will be ill advised if they endeavour to transfer it elsewhere.'

Crockford is somewhat satirical in regard to the popular practice in the Church Assembly of calling upon the government to promote reforms of various kinds. It is one of those methods of being virtuous at the expense of others which satisfies the conscience of the individual but makes no demand on his self-denial or courage.

> 'A resolution was passed calling upon the Government to do its utmost to suppress slavery where it still exists. No exception can be taken to this, but we fear that the majority of slave-dealers are unlikely to be amenable to any arguments, other than those which have been brought to bear upon them in the past by H.M. Navy.'

The Editor believes that Crockford 'is of real value to the entire Anglican Communion.' With many others, we share his conviction.

PERSONALITY IN GOD*

By C. C. J. Webb, D.Litt.

THE expressions 'personal God and personality of God' are now so familiar that it is not without surprise that one finds, on looking into their history, that they came into common use very recently — only indeed in the middle of the nineteenth century, although they occur sporadically from the later years of the eighteenth century onwards. If anyone should be curious about the evidence for this statement I must refer him to a fuller treatment of it in my Gifford Lectures on *God and Personality*, published fifteen years ago.

If one looks into a mediaeval theologian, such as St. Thomas Aquinas, one finds indeed the question raised whether we may use the word 'person' in reference to God, and the answer given that we may on account of the distinctions within the Godhead which are indicated by the expressions Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Speaking generally (for an occasional phrase may here and there be found which anticipates the usage to which we are now accustomed) it is only in connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity that the word 'person' was used of God down to quite modern times. Even when, in the sixteenth century, some of the reformers, in their reaction against the traditional teaching of the Church, went so far as to call that doctrine into question, they did not at first contend for a single personality in God, but only argued that, if the word were to be used of God at all (which they were inclined to deprecate), it would be better to speak of Him as *one* person than as *three*; this one person being with the principal school of unitarian divines, the Socinians, the person of the Father,; but with Servetus, the remarkable theologian and man of science whom Calvin caused to be burned for heresy, the person of Christ, in whom alone, according to him, God had been manifested as a person. But it was only, as I said, toward the end of the eighteenth century that people began to discuss the question whether God was

*A paper read in Hilary Term, 1934, to the Origen Society in the University of Oxford.

'personal' or whether 'personality' could be ascribed to Him, quite apart from the traditional association of the word with the bearers of the three divine Names, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, by which St. Paul expresses the content of the Christian revelation of God, and which, in the technical phraseology formed by the later Church under the influence of the Greek philosophical schools, came to be treated as designations of three ὑποστάσεις, as the Greeks said, or, as the Latins said, *personae* within the one οὐσία or *substantia* of the Godhead.

I imagine, however, that it was rather with what is now called the 'personality of God' that, in asking me to address you on this subject, you wished me to deal than with the presence of personal distinctions within the Godhead which is asserted by the doctrine of the Trinity. Nevertheless, I think it will be found, as I go on, that the past history of the phrase is not altogether irrelevant to the present usage, and that light is thrown upon the question now so often asked, without any thought of the doctrine of the Trinity, 'whether we can believe in a "personal God," by the original connexion with that doctrine of the application to God of the word "person."'

The word *persona*, which seems originally to have meant a *mask*, such as Greek and Roman actors wore upon the stage, came to be used of *a part played* in any social transaction, whether dramatic (as we still speak of *dramatis personae*), or legal (where the same man may on different occasions be plaintiff and defendant, just as in a play he may act now the hero and now the villain), or in conversation generally (as we speak of the first, second, and third persons in grammar). It is this last usage which appears to have determined the choice of the word by the first great Latin-writing theologian, Tertullian, for what the Greek theologians called the ὑποστάσεις in God. He found texts in the Bible which represented God speaking to God, where the 'I' and the 'thou' were alike divine. Such passages, in the Old Testament at any rate, a modern scholar would no doubt interpret otherwise than as referring to such a doctrine of the divine nature as the Christian Church came eventually to formulate. But, no doubt, behind Tertullian's interpretation of texts lay the fundamental Christian experience of God revealed

as present with us in Jesus Christ, who yet, as set before us in Gospels, lived in constant personal intercourse and communion with His heavenly Father, and in the Fourth Gospel is represented as distinguishing the Holy Spirit both from Himself and from His Father and speaking of Him in the *third* person, while yet attributing to Him functions which are proper to God. Such ways of speaking could only, so in the end it seemed, be reconciled with the fundamental monotheism inherited by Christianity from the religion of Israel either by denying Godhead in a strict sense to Christ and so rendering illegitimate the worship which Christians were accustomed to pay to Him, or by affirming a doctrine of personal distinctions within the One God. In preferring the latter alternative the Church translated, if I may so speak, that intercourse with God in prayer, thanksgiving, and so on, which we, as persons, enjoy, into the very life of God Himself by recognizing the Author and Perfecter of our faith, Who is for us the pattern of such intercourse and with Whom we associate our own following of His example by offering our prayers 'in His name,' as no mere prophet or anointed messenger of God but as the manifestation in the flesh of an eternally integral factor in God's own life.

If what I have been saying is true, it will follow that a doctrine of divine personality which represents the personal relation to God in which we stand as His worshippers as not accidental to Him, falling outside of His essential life, but as participation in a communion of the Son with the Father which belongs to the eternal nature of God Himself, is a doctrine peculiar to the Christian revelation. By this I do not mean that it is, so to say, a piece of authoritative information concerning God supernaturally imparted by a divine oracle, but that it is the interpretation in terms of a philosophical theology of that historical experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ which is the basis of our religion. This being so, we shall not be surprised if the acknowledgment of God as a personal being, when it is found apart from that revelation, falls short of the Christian doctrine of divine personality just in this respect, that it is an acknowledgment rather of God as the object of personal activities of ours than as in Himself personal; although we have to bear in mind that these personal activities are themselves just the same

kind of activities as those which, as perfected in Jesus Christ, have seemed to reveal to us their character as belonging to the very process of the divine life itself; so that there is no breach of continuity between the personality of God which may be inferred from the general relation of man to God and that which is revealed to us in God through the recognition of 'the man Christ Jesus' as God manifest in the flesh. But I must now turn to the nature of the evidence of divine personality to be obtained from the nature of religious experience in general, as distinguished from that which is specifically Christian.

If I may put very briefly before you my view of what religious experience is — perhaps I may be allowed to refer for a fuller account of it to an article published in the *Hibbert Journal* for last October — I would describe it as fundamentally a consciousness, natural to the normal human being, of Something, in the presence whereof he stands, which is at once at the back of everything else, himself included, and also, because he himself is thus included, at the heart of his own life. Although I have avoided in this statement any technical terms of philosophy, I do not of course suppose that the vast majority of human beings are capable of describing it in this general way, even if it occurred to them to reflect upon it sufficiently to wish to describe it at all. Yet I do believe that a sense of a single reality, characterized, as I have sometimes tried to express the matter, by the combined notes of *ultimacy* and *intimacy*, embracing ourselves and our environment, *totum quod sumus et in quo sumus* (to quote a phrase from Tertullian), and relating us to it and it to us, lies at the very root of our life as rational beings and is the germ of what we call religion, as its object is what in the last resort we mean by God.

Further, I should say that with the development of our consciousness of our own personality must go along a corresponding development of our need to find in the object of this sense of an ultimate, yet intimate Something, uniting us with our environment, no less reality than we are aware of in ourselves, and therefore no less than we ascribe to our own personality.

Lastly, I should insist that, in ascribing personality to God, we never in proportion as our attitude towards Him is genuinely religious, or (to put it otherwise) in proportion as we are really

regarding Him as God, suppose Him to be merely *another* person side by side, as it were, with ourselves, but, on the other hand, conceive Him to be bound up, so to say, with our own inmost being as no finite person, other than ourselves, can be. Hence it is, I think, that no one, however much he may feel fear and shame in reflecting that God is privy to the thoughts and intents of his heart, ever *resents* this as an intrusion upon the sacred and inalienable right of his own personality, as he would in the case of his closest friend, if he fancied that this friend was thus privy to them, apart from his own act in opening himself to him.

The remainder of this paper I propose to devote to an examination, which the time at my disposal will, of course, only allow me to outline rather than fully to work out, of certain criticisms made upon the attribution of personality to God, which may seem to demand attention from those who desire to commend to others a religion of which this attribution is an essential feature.

I will classify the criticisms which I shall consider as *four*:

(1) That the attribution of personality to God is a crude anthropomorphism.

(2) That the conception of an impersonal deity is a higher and more truly religious conception than the conception of a personal God.

(3) That belief in a personal God is derogatory to the dignity of human nature and inconsistent with a genuine belief in human freedom.

(4) That belief in a personal God can be adequately accounted for by psychology as a result of what is called 'projection,' as due to a misunderstanding of certain more or less abnormal but not uncommon states of consciousness, or as a memory of our childish relations to our parents.

With these four types of criticism I will deal in turn, premising that they are by no means mutually exclusive, but may be, and often are, put forward in combination with one another; and also that the first of the four is to be regarded not so much in the light of a distinct criticism from the rest as in that of the principle which is expressed by the others in various forms and from different points of view.

(1) The ancient Greek satirist Xenophanes, who is sometimes included by historians among the philosophers, and whose attack upon the attribution in Greek mythology of human passions and crimes to the gods seems to have made a deep impression upon his contemporaries, observed that, if horses and lions were to make images of the gods, they would make them in the likeness of horses or of lions with as much or as little right (so he would suggest) as men make their images in the likeness of men. From his day to that of Rupert Brook, with his memorable little poem called 'Fish,' this thought has been a familiar weapon in the hands of critics against the crudities of traditional religion. But one may recognize the force of the implied censure without being necessarily led to an undiscriminating condemnation of every kind of what we may call anthropomorphism, if we are to use that word quite generally, without reference to the outward bodily form of man — for we should bear in mind that Anthropomorphism in the proper sense, in which it is precisely this bodily form which is attributed to the divine Being, has been deliberately rejected by the Christian Church as a heresy.

For we may learn from Plato, who condemned quite as severely as Xenophanes the attribution to the gods of what in men are reckoned immoralities and weaknesses, that it is one thing to conceive them as having bodies and passions like ours, and quite another to recognize that what we call the *reason* in man claims, as his bodily instincts and passions in no wise claim, that character of universal validity or value which, if any character whatsoever can be regarded as appropriate to deity, must surely be so regarded. As certainly as our bodies (the thought is Plato's) are fashioned of elements drawn from the store of like elements in our material environment, so must our minds be drawn from a vaster mind 'in the nature of Zeus,' as Plato says. If horses and lions were to make images of the gods, they would, we may guess, make them like horses or lions. But in fact horses and lions do *not* make images of the gods at all; and this is because, not having in them the divine element which is in us, they have no idea of God; whereas we, having it, since we were made in God's image, already implanted in us, rightly perceive, though not in our bodies, yet in our reason, the likeness of that in whose image we are made.

Thus believers in God as the archetype of the reason and personality which we are conscious of ourselves as possessing have no ground for fearing the famous jest, sometimes repeated as though it were a crushing sarcasm, that God made man in His own image and man has ever since been returning the compliment. For it is precisely because we are made in God's image, and so far as we are so made, that we can represent Him thus to ourselves; and this is, it may be noted in passing, the point of one of Descartes' celebrated arguments for the existence of God — that which has been called, though not by Descartes himself, the 'anthropological' argument — that, namely, from the presence of the idea of God in the human mind.

(2) But, it may be said — and here we reach our second type of objection to the recognition of personality in God — that personality necessarily involves a limitation by other persons, and that it is to lower our conception of That wherein 'we live and move and have our being' to attribute to it a character inconsistent with such other characters, more appropriate thereto, as 'immanence' and 'all-inclusiveness.' Here I would make four remarks. (*a*) I would point out that, as we have already seen, our attribution of personality to *God* must not transfer to Him the mutual exclusiveness which is found in finite persons: because this mutual exclusiveness is in truth incompatible with what is certainly inalienable from our conception of deity, namely, *immanence*. 'Closer' (as the poet says) 'is He than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet.' We pray that 'we may live in Him and He in us.' So far, then, as the criticism which we are considering is directed against a conception of God as 'finite,' such as has sometimes, in the interest of a personal and ethical theism, been defended — though only, as I am persuaded, where there is some misunderstanding of the nature of religious experience — by certain philosophical theologians, it is to be accepted. On the other hand, to deny personality to God may be to fall into a misunderstanding on the opposite side. For (*b*) where God is denied to be personal, it is very easy to slip into regarding Him as not more but less than personal. One may find people thinking that their conception of God is higher than that of their neighbours who worship a personal God, while in fact they are conceiving Him after the analogy of a force or energy, of gravitation or electricity or life, which they

would certainly not in other connexions regard as higher but as lower modes of existence than that which is their own as self-conscious minds or persons; or, again, after the analogy of some quality or activity which we value highly but only know as a quality or activity of persons. Or one finds people extolling what is often called the 'pantheism' of the Indian philosophical schools as profounder and more spiritually satisfying than Christian theism, without observing the correspondence which exists between the latter and that more vivid consciousness of individual personality which has been developed in Western civilization and which is closely associated with those features in which that civilization may be allowed, even by those who are fully alive to the advantages possessed by the Oriental spirit over the Occidental in certain other respects, to be superior to the East. Once more, there are no doubt philosophers, such as one who is acknowledged to be among the greatest — I mean Spinoza — who speak much of God and that in terms which are at times suffused by an unmistakably religious feeling and yet who reject as unintelligible the introduction of the notion of personality into our thought of Him. I shall content myself here with suggesting that such conceptions of God as we find in the writings of these philosophers seem to be irreconcilable with *worship*, and that, in the case of Spinoza in particular, there is what I may call a misfit between his metaphysical speculation and the personal piety which he inherited from the tradition of his people, which has been, in the phrase of St. Athanasius, the school of the knowledge of God to all nations. (*c*) This brings me to my third remark upon the second type of objection to the recognition of personality in God; namely, that it is just so far as *worship* acquires (or is perfected by) a belief in personality in God that it may fairly be claimed for this belief that it is demanded by the religious consciousness. Another person, side by side with oneself, and comprehended along with oneself within a wider whole, is no proper object of worship. For the object of divine worship must be, as I have said, both *ultimate* and *intimate*, as another finite person cannot be; yet, on the other hand, neither can, I think, such worship be paid to what, like a law or a principle or an ideal, eternally valid and valuable as these may be, lacks that concrete reality which one

knows directly in oneself, and is inevitably our standard of such reality in the world beyond oneself. (*d*) Lastly, I would observe that in the specifically Christian doctrine of the Trinity an effort is made so to conceive personality in God as to hold together the implication in the notion of personality a mutual relation between persons and the thought of God as Absolute Being, not existing side by side with others within a larger whole. I do not pretend to think that this effort is successful in removing all difficulties; but I believe that it at least meets the requirements of the religious consciousness as does no other extant doctrine of the divine nature.

(3) The objection to belief in a personal God which we have just been considering turned upon the supposition that personality, as something essentially finite and relative, is not worthy of God. That to which I now turn approaches the subject from another side. It represents the subordination of our own personality to a divine personality with a right to claim its allegiance, as derogatory to the true dignity of our human nature, which in virtue of what we call its personality ranks as the highest thing within our experience, the 'roof and crown of things' produced by the process of evolution whereof we are the outcome. This criticism, characteristic of what is nowadays called, especially in America, by the name of 'Humanism,' and recently reinforced in Germany by the remarkable work of a Berlin professor on ethics, Nicolai Hartmann, may be countered by denying the truth of the insinuation, sometimes made by those who put it forward and, I think, always implied in it, that belief in the sovereignty of God tends to weaken in those who entertain it their sense of personal dignity and their willingness to stand on their own feet in the face of a hostile world, by providing them with an imaginary Master and Protector, and thus encouraging timidity and servility in place of resolute courage and self-reliance. It is on the contrary written on the face of history that nowhere have such virtues as these been more conspicuous than in those the mainspring of whose actions has been this same belief in divine sovereignty. It is sufficient to refer in passing to those old Calvinists with whom this belief may be said to have constituted almost the whole of their religion. These same Calvinists may also seem decisively to rebut the kindred

suggestion that one important consequence of emphasis upon divine Sovereignty, namely, the conviction that all events, including their own notions and actions, are predetermined by the divine will, tends to depress the sense of personal freedom and to check personal initiative in those who seriously embrace it. Whatever fault we may be inclined to find, on grounds of theology, philosophy, or common-sense, with this conviction, it has indubitably in fact promoted among its holders a temper remarkable for its independence and love of liberty, personal and political.

(4) I pass lastly to an objection which is often alleged in support of that which I have just been considering, the objection that the very idea of a Being superior to ourselves with whom we are or may be in communion is readily explicable by psychology as an illusion, due to what is technically called by writers on that subject 'projection,' the result of an innate tendency in the human mind to contemplate its own desires or ideals as fulfilled or realized outside of itself. With some this general explanation is eked out by an interpretation of those 'mystical' experiences, as they are called, on which reliance has been often placed, not only by those who have themselves enjoyed them, but also by others who are acquainted with them only by report, as furnishing direct proof of a divine presence revealed therein. To these experiences parallels are found in the hallucinations of those suffering from certain forms of mental distraction and in the delusions sometimes produced by the inhalation of certain gases or the imbibing of certain drugs; and it is argued that the existence of these parallels deprives the experiences which they resemble of all value as evidences of a reality beyond the mystic's own mind with which he is on such occasions in contact.

Now I should by no means deny that what some psychologists call 'projection' actually plays a part and an important part in our apprehension of God; but so it does in our apprehension of our fellow-men. Them also we come to know by reading as it were out into them what we have in ourselves. I do not indeed for a moment believe that we are aware of the existence of other people (as has sometimes been suggested) through an inference by way of analogy from the likeness of

their bodily movements to our own to the presence in them of a self-consciousness such as we ourselves possess. This, as I have argued elsewhere at length, is inconsistent with the fact that we do not (except with the help of mirrors) see our own bodies as we see those of our fellows; and with the truth — undeniable, as it appears to me — that, did we really start — as assuredly we do not — from the position of what certain writers would describe as a 'solipsist,' aware only of himself and needing, before he could attain to awareness of any reality than himself, to infer a cause beyond himself of what at first appear to him to be merely states of himself and feelings of his own — did we, I say, so start, we could never get out of that initial solipsistic position. Yet, though we are from the first aware of other selves besides our own selves, it is because we *are* selves that we can be aware of other selves; and our actual knowledge of them is conditioned and limited by what we ourselves are. We shall then, I think, find that the same type of argument which is used to show that our supposed knowledge of God is illusion, would be no less fatal to our supposed knowledge of our fellows; for what admittedly creates a difference between the two cases, the perception of the bodies of other persons by the senses, could never by itself assure us of the independent reality of their minds. With respect to the doubts thrown on the mystic's sense of a divine Presence by its resemblance to the hallucinations due to drugs or insanity, I should in the first place suggest that we can only mistake one thing for another where we have already some independent acquaintance with that other, and, in the second place, while I do not deny the genuine validity of some mystical experiences, despite their liability to be simulated under certain pathological conditions, I should nevertheless insist that there is a widespread sense, to which I have already referred, of being in the presence of a Being who is at once at the heart of our experience and the ultimate reality behind the things and events which constitute the object of that experience — a sense which is by no means limited to the exceptional people whom we call 'mystics' and which is to be classed with those inexpugnable convictions of the reality of an external world and of other people, which we are indeed glad to buttress with arguments but which, as they are antecedent to all arguments, no

arguments against their trustworthiness could ever persuade us to surrender. As to the origin of the belief in God from the human child's experience of his relations with his parents, I would call your attention to two considerations. It is admitted that no human being ever had in reality that supreme moral authority and control of circumstances which the human child tends to attribute to his parents, so that the imputation of these to them implies the presence in the human mind from the first of an ideal standard which is no mere reflection of facts of which we become apprised through the senses. On the other hand, that we normally become aware of that standard, the presence whereof in the human mind was, as I mentioned before, regarded by Descartes as a proof of the real existence of God, through testing thereby our experience of parental authority, is precisely what we should expect if St. Paul be right in telling us that every fatherhood, earthly or otherwise, is named from the archetypal fatherhood of God.

A LAUGHING PHILOSOPHER

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

THE man of vitality, magnetism, personality, or whatever that intangible but unmistakable quality may be called, is not necessarily a man of character. He may be vain, unprincipled, vindictive and egotistical. Virtue and vitality, unfortunately, do not invariably go together in equal degrees. But sometimes, on rarer occasions than we could wish, the two are harmoniously united in one individual, and the result is a man who can really be called great. Such was Sydney Smith.

'The Smith of Smiths'[1] Macaulay called him, and the impression he created upon his contemporaries was immense. All types of people found him irresistible—grand ladies, statesmen, country squires, peasants and children. Even literary men surrendered to his charm, and Scotsmen thawed in his presence. He once kept Thomas and Jane Carlyle in fits of laughter for a

[1] Mr. Hesketh Pearson has given this appropriate title to his important and highly entertaining Life of Sydney Smith, just published by Hamish Hamilton at 12/6.

whole evening — an almost miraculous achievement. And lest the charm of his humour should be thought to have lain in the indecorous, we may note with reassurance that Queen Victoria used to laugh uncontrollably at the sayings of this remarkable clergyman as repeated to her by her dear Lord Melbourne. There were times when even peers and noblemen (though the same is not recorded of bishops, who did not like Sydney so well) would actually and literally roll upon the floor in mirth. We have this on the authority of Lord John Russell. When Sydney went out to dine, butlers were known to smile and footmen to spill soup, for he did not reserve his repartees until the ladies had withdrawn. His wit was not of the recondite sort, tart, bitter or far-fetched, which can only be appreciated at a high table. Sydney had the art of making ordinary things look infinitely ludicrous. 'I have seen him,' wrote one of his collaborators on the *Edinburgh Review*, who subsequently became Lord Chancellor, 'at Foston (his Yorkshire living) drive the servants from the room with tears running down their faces, in peals of inextinguishable laughter.' Thomas Moore in his diary frequently records occasions when he or someone else was rendered limp, incapable or ill by laughter at some sally of Sydney's. 'Left Lord John's,' he says, 'with Sydney and Luttrell, and when we got to Cockspur Street (having laughed all the way) we were all three seized with such convulsions of cachinnation at something (I forget what) which Sydney said, that we were obliged to separate, and reel each his own way with the fit.' For a clergyman of the Church of England Sydney Smith had remarkable gifts. Not that he pleased everybody. Byron thought him smug, and Harriet Martineau did not care for the flippant way in which he too often treated ecclesiastical topics. She, to be sure, was a Nonconformist. Mr. Gladstone, however, another serious-minded person, liked him.

But Sydney Smith was something more than an extremely able buffoon — though to be this is no mean achievement, and adds generously to the sum total of human happiness. Sydney was a reformer and a progressive at a time when such professions exposed a man to charges of atheism, jacobinism, sedition and bad taste. He was a believer in liberty in days when such a belief was quite as unpopular and rare as it is fast becoming in the

second quarter of the twentieth century. Furthermore, though he was a man who would have enjoyed promotion as well as anyone else, he was entirely disinterested. 'He is a very clever fellow; but he will never be a bishop,' remarked George III, who knew how bishops are made. Though he did more than any other single man to convert the country to the Whig standpoint, not even the Whigs, when they got into power, dare do anything more for Sydney than make him a canon of St. Paul's.

It is very difficult to be a progressive and not to be a prig. At least it is so in England, where it has not hitherto been customary for progressives to be beaten up or gaoled. So long as a man can be a progressive or a reformer with reasonable impunity, there will always be a certain type of man and woman who will ascend the advanced platform as a means of self-display. The holding and proclaiming of advanced views becomes a sort of exhibitionism. That this has never been so to the same extent upon the continent of Europe as in our own island, is due to the fact that in less easy-going communities the will is taken for the deed, and those who talk too wildly are put into irons. This introduces into continental politics a certain air of realism. It is a weakness of reformists also that they take themselves with an excessive seriousness. This may be excused in the young of the species, but it is painful to see middle-aged reformers, male and female, who have not got beyond this adolescent stage. Why should the world take them seriously when they are plainly incapable of serious action, and confine themselves to pathetic bleatings, to appeals to the world's better nature, and to manifestos in the Press?

Sydney Smith escaped these pitfalls of the idealist. In the first place he did not confine himself to high thinking and carefully thought-out gestures, but set himself to supply the need of the moment with the zest and hilarious irresponsibility of the schoolboy. The whole thing was a huge joke; the *Edinburgh Review*, of which he was the moving spirit, tickled him to death. The immediate need was for propaganda—to put across the new Liberalism. He knew that Englishmen would never be converted to these doctrines by homilectics, nor would it help matters to be peevish, or hectoring, or merely caustic. What the public wanted was reason, with a good slice of humour thrown

in as a mental lubricant. Sydney knew exactly what goods were required to meet the case and proceeded to deliver them. He found it almost impossible to keep a straight face while he did so, since the superstitions he was attacking were so obviously laughable. Game Laws, the withholding of the franchise from Roman Catholics, the pushing of little boys up burning chimneys, the refusal of legal counsel to poor men charged with a capital offence, all these quaint and cruel anomalies could and should be laughed out of court. People read this new quarterly with its binding of buff and blue, and were surprised to find what a sense of humour they possessed. Why, spring guns and Tory squires were nearly as ridiculous as the naked cannibals on the Guinea Coast!

All the time, of course, this zealous propagandist was in deadly earnest, but that is a very different matter from taking yourself seriously. Sydney did not take *himself* seriously; what he took seriously were such things as reason, personal liberty, justice and a fair deal all round. That he argued with a laugh instead of a sneer or a snarl, did not make him less sincere or his arguments less effective. To understand Smith one must remember that he was born in the eighteenth century (1771), the age of reason, and lived on into the age of — we will not say what. He died in 1845, the year of Newman's secession and of Samuel Wilberforce's appointment to the see of Oxford; and yet he remained faithful to the traditions of the civilized century into which he had been born. In this he was a most exceptional Englishman, for nothing could be more deplorable than the complete collapse of mental morale which ensued after the distressing events of 1789, and during and after the career of the dreadful Boney. Intellectually and culturally, the countrymen of Hume and Gibbon reverted to the standards of barbarism, becoming timid, self-righteous, insular, and methodistically or tractarianly religious.

Sydney Smith's father was not badly off, and his sons were sent to Eton and Winchester. Sydney drew the latter and remembered his schooldays with a shudder to the end of his life, though he did well and became Prefect of Hall — the most responsible and covetable position in the school. He went up to New College, Oxford, and at the end of his second year ex-

changed his Scholarship for a Fellowship of £100 a year, after which his father never sent him another penny. Consequently, as he would not accept hospitality which he could not return, his life at Oxford was solitary and unhappy. In his spare time he studied medicine and anatomy, but his parent refused further financial aid and told him he might become 'a college tutor or a parson.' Or alternatively that he might go 'as a supercargo to China.' Sydney was not too hopeful about the clerical profession, and observed that in the Church 'a man is thrown into life with his hands tied and bidden to swim; he does well if he keeps his head above water.' Nevertheless, as it was the only profession then open to a scholarly and intelligent man without private means, into the Church went Sydney, being ordained in 1794 to the curacy of Netheravon on Salisbury Plain. He was in sole charge of the parish for three years, doing what he could for his parishioners, the condition of the poor among them being appalling. The struggle against ignorance and poverty was grim, but the squire, Mr. Hicks-Beach, was sympathetic and took a great fancy to his curate. Eventually he sent Sydney off to Edinburgh as tutor to his son, the Continent being too disturbed to be a suitable playground for young gentlemen. Off the two went together in the spring of 1798, found Birmingham 'a place of loud noises and bad smells,' and Manchester 'a horrid, unfinished town,' as it still remains. They climbed Skiddaw, and eventually reached Edinburgh, where the smells of Birmingham were far outclassed, but where Dugald Stewart was lecturing on Moral Philosophy, Dr. Gregory on Medicine, and Dr. Black on Chemistry. Sydney's technique of humour, as well as his intellect, was doubtless strengthened by his sojourn in the north. 'It requires,' noted this careful observer, 'a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding.' He was invited to deliver a course of sermons in Charlotte Chapel, Rose Street, and 'had the pleasure of seeing my audience nod approbation while they slept.'

But something more than sermons was to come of Sydney Smith's sojourn in Caledonia. He made the acquaintance of a number of young Scottish intellectuals—Archibald Murray, Jeffrey, Horner and Brougham (subsequently Lord Chancellor), and between them they floated the *Edinburgh Review*. The

Edinburgh was Sydney's own child. But for his optimism, lightheartedness, efficiency, good-nature and personal ascendancy their plans would have come to nothing.

For twenty-five years Sydney Smith wrote for the *Edinburgh*, and Mr. Pearson remarks that

> 'of all the articles which appeared in a paper which revolutionised both politics and journalism, those of Sydney are the most modern in tone and incomparably the most amusing.'

In 1803 he returned to London, being now married, and managed to get appointed as preacher at the Foundling Hospital at a stipend of £50 a year. This was hardly adequate for a growing family, and Sir Thomas Bernard came to the rescue with a proposal that he should give a course of lectures on Moral Philosophy at the Royal Institution. Sydney knew very little about Moral Philosophy, save what he had gleaned from Dugald Stewart, but for the sake of the £200 involved he would have lectured upon anything. As it was, the first lecture was such a success that he became the talk of the town. The excitement increased with each lecture, and Moral Philosophy proved so attractive to London Society that Albemarle Street was blocked with carriages and not a seat was to be had for love or money. Sydney was surprised and delighted and described himself as 'the most successful swindle of the season.' Sir Robert Peel, then a boy, retained through life a vivid recollection of the speaker's manner. There were moments when the audience was hushed with intensity of interest; at other times the assembly was convulsed with mirth, for in Sydney's hands even Moral Philosophy could be made amusing. It was in one of these lectures that Sydney enriched the English language with the phrase 'a square peg in a round hole.'

Sydney Smith was now taken up by Lady Holland, one of his brothers having married Lord Holland's aunt. In Holland House everybody of distinction in the worlds of science, art and politics was received — Byron, Grey, Russell, Humphry Davy, Metternich, Wilkie, Washington Irving, Tallyrand, Bentham, Romilly, Brougham, and so on — though the more violent Tories kept away. Lady Holland had the air of Queen Elizabeth and ordered lords about like footmen. People sitting near were expected to pick up her fan whenever she dropped it, and as she did this so often Count d'Orsay humbly suggested that he should

remain on the floor for the purpose. She would tap the table with her fan and tell Macaulay to stop talking. She would refuse to sit down to dinner with her husband if she disliked his waistcoat, and would sometimes order the servants to take away his plate or wheel him off to bed (he suffered from gout) in the middle of one of his best stories. When she went out to dinner she arranged who should sit next to her, and the embarrassed hostess dare not say her nay. She was hated by all the young women. When at last she consented to travel in a railway train, she instructed the driver to restrict his speed to twenty miles an hour. She adored Napoleon, and called him 'poor dear man,' and sent papers and plums to St. Helena. When Sydney Smith had established himself in her good graces, he was the only person who was allowed to take liberties. 'Ring the bell, Sydney,' she would say. 'Oh, yes,' he would reply, and ask if he should sweep the floor too.

In the summer of 1807, and again in the following year, the polite world was convulsed by a series of letters written by one Peter Plymley to his brother Abraham, a country clergyman. These were written with the brilliance of Swift and a humour that Swift lacked, and were a scathing indictment of the average Protestant attitude towards Catholic emancipation. Their wit, ridicule and common-sense contributed more than anything else to prepare public opinion for the change. Thirty odd years later Sydney explained the inclusion of the 'Letters' in a complete edition of his published works:

> 'Somehow or another, it came to be conjectured that I was the author: I have always denied it; but finding that I deny it in vain, I have thought it might be as well to include the Letters in this Collection.'

Lady Holland had insisted in 1806 that the Lord Chancellor should bestow a living upon her protegé. The benefice in question was Foston-le-Clay, in Yorkshire, and two years later a new Archbishop insisted upon residence, as he was entitled to do in accordance with the Act of 1803. So in the summer of 1809 Sydney went north, being now 38 years old. To meet the costs of removal from London he published his sermons in two volumes. The squire of the parish is thus described by the new incumbent:

> 'He was a perfect specimen of the Trullibers of old; he smoked, hunted, drank beer at his door with his grooms and dogs, and spelt over the county paper on Sundays. At first he heard I was a Jacobin

and a dangerous fellow, and turned aside as I passed: but at length, when he found the peace of the village undisturbed, harvests much as usual, Juno and Ponto uninjured, he first bowed, then called, and at last reached such a pitch of confidence that he used to bring the papers, that I might explain the difficult words to him; actually discovered that I had made a joke, laughed till I thought he would have died of convulsions, and ended by inviting me to see his dogs.'

The fact was that Sydney was equally at ease with everybody.

'He was not conscious of social inferiority in the presence of a prince, nor of social superiority in the presence of a parlourmaid.'

Mr. Pearson assures us that

'An extensive search through the chronicles and correspondence of the period has failed to reveal a single instance of obsequiousness in Sydney's attitude to titled people.'

He appeared quite contented in his exile, managed his glebe, looked after his parishioners, and built himself a house, visiting London once a year. He taught his eldest child, doctored his family and the poor of the parish, and became a Justice of the Peace — annoying his fellow-magistrates by always siding with the poacher against the squire. He made friends with the farmers and labourers. He tried experiments in agriculture. Once he fed his pigs on fermented grain and reported that they were quite happy in their sty grunting the National Anthem.

In January, 1828, Sydney was appointed to a stall at Bristol. It happened that the new Canon was chosen to deliver the Gunpowder Plot anniversary sermon in the cathedral before the Mayor and Corporation. He delivered a discourse on Toleration which caused great indignation, and the city fathers thereafter discontinued their attendance at the 5th of November service. Sydney published his sermon and so aggravated his offence. Not long afterwards the Catholic Emancipation Bill passed, and he wrote to a Catholic friend:

'I rejoice at the temple which has been reared to Toleration; and I am proud that I worked as a bricklayer's labourer on it — without pay, and with the enmity and abuse of those who were unfavourable to its construction.'

The year after receiving his canonry Sydney Smith left Foston, by an exchange, for Combe Florey in Somerset, a living which could be held more conveniently with his stall. Here he fitted up a room as an apothecary's shop and delighted in dosing everybody. The villagers liked being doctored by him, as he never mixed the Thirty-nine Articles in his prescriptions. Observers noted the singular mixture of grin and reverence with

which his rustic parishioners saluted him. One visitor at Combe Florey was the Rev. Thomas Malthus. 'I got an agreeable party for him of unmarried people. There was only one lady who had a child; but he is a good-natured man.' He thought highly of Malthus, and urged Lord Grey to give him a prebend; but in 1834 he died. Another pair of new friends was George Grote and his wife. 'I like them, I like them,' said Sydney; 'I like him, he is so ladylike; and I like her, she's such a perfect gentleman.' Mrs. Grote was fond of having a finger in every pie, and Sydney told her, 'I have the most perfect confidence in your indiscretion.'

In June, 1830, George IV died, Wellington's administration collapsed, and the Whigs came in under Lord Grey. The Edinburgh reviewers now stepped up in the world. 'The *Review* began in high places (garrets) and ends in them,' wrote Sydney. Brougham became Lord Chancellor, but neither he nor Lord Grey could visualise Sydney as a bishop; like Pilate, they feared the multitude. One must not upset the Church or the House of Lords. Meanwhile Sydney followed the health of deans with anxiety. The Bishop of Worcester died in September, 1831, but Grey's courage failed him and the mitre went to a Tory. But a day or two later Grey offered him a Residentiary Canonry at St. Paul's. It was accepted. 'It puts me at my ease for life,' wrote Sydney, 'I asked for nothing—never did anything shabby to procure preferment.' Much to his joy he was now compelled to be in London for three months of the year. Meanwhile he was active in propaganda in favour of the Reform Bill, but thereafter his enthusiasm for politics declined. He preached with vigour in St. Paul's. 'I preach violently,' he told Mrs. Grote. 'And there is a strong smell of sulphur in my sermons.' He warned another friend that 'to go to St. Paul's is certain death. The thermometer is several degrees below zero.'

Something should be said as to Sydney Smith's attitude to the Church. He belonged to the eighteenth century in that he distrusted fanatics, especially Methodists and puritanical Protestants. Hearing that a clergyman had refused to bury a Dissenter, he said that for his part he would be gladly burying them all day. Puseyites, of course, only came to the fore towards the end of his career, but had he been younger he might have pro-

duced an alternative set of Tracts for the Times. 'Newmania' was what he called the new movement. Mr. Hesketh Pearson admirably sums up his general attitude as follows:

> 'He saw the good and bad in every creed, but believed the Church of England taught the soundest, because the sanest, doctrine. There was no enthusiasm in the Church of England, therefore less probability of error. It was a native growth admirably adapted to the temperament of the race, catholic in its allowance for diversity of opinion, humanly tolerant, theologically incomprehensible.'

For such reasons as these he always defended it when it was attacked, whether from within by pretentious priests or bishops, or from without by opinionated atheists. Assaults on religion revolted him.

> 'I hate the insolence, persecution, and intolerance which so often pass under the name of religion, but I have an unaffected horror of irreligion and impiety, and every principle of suspicion and fear would be excited in me by a man who professed himself an infidel.'

Perhaps here he was overstating his case, for a number of his friends were 'infidels.' Possibly it was militant atheism that he disliked. Yet Sydney was no indifferentist. He had one strong moral passion—zeal for individual freedom. This was the motive power which set him fighting for Catholic Emancipation, for there was much in Roman Catholicism which he disliked. And in his own Church he did not cease to champion the liberty of the under dog against the big-wigs. He was never a bishops' man, and in bishops' eyes must have seemed to belong to the synagogue of Satan. He was always making fun of them—their infallibility, their pomposity, their ecclesiastical assurance. Someone asked him whether a certain bishop was going to get married. 'Perhaps he may,' was the answer; 'yet how can a bishop marry? How can he flirt? The most he can say is, "I will see you in the vestry after service."' Is this a trifle vulgar? Possibly; but it is amusing and true to life. But Sydney was not always flippant. Sometimes he took off the gloves. He charged the Bishop of Lincoln, who had assailed the Catholics and given reasons for continuing their disabilities, with

> 'using all the influence of his splendid situation, however conscientiously, to deepen the ignorance, and inflame the fury, of his fellow-creatures.'

Another prelate who came in for it was his Lordship of Peterborough, who had decided to put eighty-seven questions on points of doctrine to all the clergy in his diocese (Phillpotts of

Exeter, it will be remembered, tried the same game, and brought on the Gorham Case, some years later), in order to detect the slightest taint of Calvinism in their make-up. Exclusion from livings would follow failure to satisfy the inquisitor. Sydney suggested that

> 'a tender regard to men's rights and feelings, a desire to avoid sacred squabbles, a fondness for quiet, and an ardent wish to make everybody happy, would be of far more value to the Church of England than all his learning and vigilance of inquisition.'

The Bishop had excused himself by saying that only two curates had been excluded. This was just what was needed to rouse Sydney, who had been a curate and knew what it meant. 'So the Emperor Hayti boasted that he had only cut off two persons' heads for disagreeable behaviour at his table.' The Bishop talked of using his rights. 'It must be presumed,' wrote Sydney, 'that all men whom the law has invested with rights, Nature has invested with common-sense.'

In 1836 the Ecclesiastical Commission was established by Parliament as a permanent institution for the management of Church business. Sydney Smith objected both to its constitution and its recommendations, and attacked it with such vigour that many of its recommendations were dropped. He became still less popular in episcopal circles. The Commission was packed with bishops, and all interests not episcopal were overlooked. A hundred years ago bishops were not so very different, apparently from what they are now; they desired more patronage.

Sydney pointed out that the whole income of the Church, equally divided, would only give each clergyman the wages of a nobleman's butler. It was absurd to reduce the incomes of the lesser dignitaries; it would be better to cut the exorbitant incomes of such sees as Canterbury, Durham and London. Canonries and deaneries with sufficient incomes might well be preserved intact and regarded as prizes to attract men of ability into the Church. Since the clergy could not be paid equitably, they must be paid by lottery. Such was Sydney's common-sense view. The alternative would be a set of badly-paid, ill-educated fanatics. Another recommendation of the episcopal Commission was that the livings in the gifts of Deans and Chapters should be taken away and given to bishops. This made Sydney see red; he knew that they would never dare to

dispossess lay patrons, but thought they could concentrate all ecclesiastically held patronage into their own hands. Bishops then, as now, wanted to be autocrats, only to-day they use the backstairs methods of the Enabling Act. And to-day there is, alas, no Sydney Smith.

Some of Sydney Smith's sermons were modern enough. There is one, preached in St. Paul's on the accession of Queen Victoria, on 'The Duties of the Queen,' which is a strongly-reasoned and strongly-worded attack on War, which he called 'the greatest curse which can be entailed upon mankind.' 'God is forgotten in war — every principle of Christian charity trampled upon.' His humane sympathies and strong common-sense, together with his knowledge of human nature, led him to reject the romanticism which often makes women and clergymen bellicose.

This tall, imposing, eupeptic man, with his three chins, his bright, lively and humorous eye, his mouth 'like an oyster,' his warm heart, his quick sympathies, his courageous and hopeful outlook, his fine nose quick to smell sham and humbug even in a bishop, suffered much in private, as such men often do, from depression of spirits. We may, in closing an inadequate account of him, quote in full a letter which he wrote in 1820 to Lady Morpeth, since it contains his own methods of fighting this particular bugbear, and sheds some light upon his philosophy of life:

'Dear Lady Georgina,—Nobody has suffered more from low spirits than I have done — so I feel for you. 1st. Live as well as you dare. 2nd. Go into the shower bath with a small quantity of water at a temperature low enough to give you a slight sensation of cold, 75 or 80 degrees. 3rd. Amusing books. 4th. Short views of human life — not further than dinner or tea. 5th. Be as busy as you can. 6th. See as much as you can of those friends who respect and like you. 7th. And of those acquaintances who amuse you. 8th. Make no secret of low spirits to your friends, but talk of them freely — they are always worse for dignified concealment. 9th. Attend to the effects tea and coffee produce upon you. 10th. Compare your lot with that of other people. 11th. Don't expect too much from human life — a sorry business at the best. 12th. Avoid poetry, dramatic representations (except comedy), music, serious novels, melancholy, sentimental people, and everything likely to excite feeling or emotion, not ending in active benevolence. 13th. *Do good*, and endeavour to please everybody of every degree. 14th. Be as much as you can in the open air without fatigue. 15th. Make the room where you commonly sit gay and pleasant. 16th. Struggle by little and little against idleness. 17th. Don't be too severe upon yourself, or underrate yourself, but do yourself justice. 18th. Keep good blazing fires. 19th. Be firm and constant in the exercise of rational religion. 20th. Believe me, dear Lady Georgina, Very truly yours,—SYDNEY SMITH.'

CATHOLICISM AND MODERNISM

AN AMERICAN VIEW

By W. Norman Pittenger.

ARE the Catholic Faith and the modern mind utterly irreconcilable? Or is it really possible to retain the basic values of Christianity while accepting all that modern discovery and critical study have to offer? To those who have the destiny of civilization on their hearts and minds in these troubled days, this is the most vital question of the generation; for upon our answer to it depends, under God, the future not only of the faith of our fathers, but also of culture itself.

It is indeed becoming quite clear that the Catholic Faith and a constructive modernism must be brought together in a new synthesis, if the Christian Church is to continue to be the spiritual home of the men of to-day and to-morrow. Such a synthesis is not only desirable, it is absolutely essential. Fortunately, it is actually in process of being realized; and there is every hope for the emergence of a richer, deeper Catholicism, retaining those essential truths for which Christianity has ever stood and from which it has derived its power, and welcoming all the best that modern thought can offer toward the presentation of the faith in a form intelligible to men and women living in the new age.

This modernizing Catholicism is the legitimate heir of the great Christian tradition: like Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and the great medieval scholastics, the modern Catholic would baptize the new knowledge into Christ. The Christian revelation is a living and developing organism; and God is always carrying on the education of His creatures. Catholicism is ever capable of correlation with the fresh knowledge which continually streams in on us from the many realms of human experience. Dean Frederick C. Grant has expressed this thought:

> 'A faith so potent through successive ages, so various in its manifestations, so adaptable to changing conditions in generation after generation, so rich in spiritual illumination of different races and nations of men, has still a secret to unfold in this new age. In fact, one cannot well share the Catholic outlook in the twentieth century unless he is something of a modernist, nor be an ardent modernist unless he has caught some glimpse of the meaning of the Catholic faith in the past.'

It is too late in the day to hold up the advance of scientific

discovery: the position of the ultra-conservative is reminiscent of King Canute and his attempt to keep back the waves. But such an attitude, despite the claims of its fanatical defenders, is really not Christian. The absurd attempt of some religionists to combat scientific theories, maintain Biblical inerrancy, and hinder critical investigation, is a parody of the Christian religion.

The ultra-conservative, no matter where he may be found, is carrying on a losing battle, for he is fighting, even if unconsciously, against the Divine Spirit who makes all things new and who is ever guiding his Church into more and more of the truth. The final judgment on this sort of mind was pronounced by Erasmus hundreds of years ago: 'By making the new learning synonymous with heresy, you identify orthodoxy with ignorance.' Some sort of modernism is essential. But what sort?

It has become apparent to an increasing number of observers that the negative or destructive type of liberalism is in process of disintegration. The process of reduction adopted by certain schools of religious thought seems to have resulted in a startling departure from much that is distinctively and essentially Christian. The attempt to manufacture religion out of thin air is always dangerous; and the extreme nebulosity of some modern doctrinal statements has resulted in a complete misunderstanding of the nature of the Christian religion. This particular sort of liberalism has been unable to combat non-theistic humanism and secularism; for it has been without historical continuity of faith and experience, without profound devotional and sacramental life, without definite metaphysical convictions. As a result, modern religion has become to the average layman a matter of personal and social ethics, and that alone. It has lost the *O altitudo* which is essential to all vital religion; and with it, that sense of the given and the numinous which is the *differentia* between religion and ethics. The rich worship of the Catholic liturgies, with their awestruck references to an adorable and transcendent God who deigns to come down to his little creature man, sounds strange and foreign to many modern ears. To this type of liberalism may properly be applied the words of a former President of Princeton University:

> 'When you take away from anything that which makes it something, you have left precisely nothing.'

Nor is there any real hope in such reactionary movements as the European school associated with the name of Karl Barth. This theology of correction, as it is often called, is certainly valuable for its insistence on the transcendence of God; but at heart it appears thoroughly negative, for by its profound pessimism and extreme dualism, it seems to make impossible any real belief in the revelation of God through His creation, and especially through man; and this belief is at the very centre of Christianity.

What then may be said of the new religions, such as humanism, which are being proposed to-day? Plainly these are even less sufficient for our need than a purely critical liberalism — even if they are more consistent in that they carry the disintegration process to its logical goal. Their authors have not been conspicuously successful so far in the creation of substitutes for Christianity. Humanism, which started a few years ago with free advertizing and the blessing of some of our leading thinkers, appears to have died a natural death. The 'new religions' leave precious little behind them. Like that religion of the future once sketched by President Eliot of Harvard, they are like a soda-cracker, which is quite all right, but only provided that you have something more substantial to go with it.

Perhaps there is something, after all, in the terse comment which a French statesman-ecclesiastic is reported to have made to one of the founders of 'theophilanthropy' in the eighteenth century. The religionist had complained that his new cult was not progressing very well, and he had asked for a suggestion which might help him to give it life and power. 'You might get yourself crucified and rise the third day from the dead,' the dignitary suggested.

If it has no sound basis in historic fact, no loyalty to continuity of tradition, and no cumulative testimony of holy souls who have lived and died in the faith, a religion is certain to pass off the scene. Nor can we worship man alone: 'I'd as soon worship a pack of monkeys as the human race,' said Huxley. The fate of civilization may properly be said to be intimately bound up with the future of the Christian religious tradition, for this alone is likely to be effective in restoring order and sanity to modern life. As science develops and man's technical knowledge

grows, his religious and moral nature must also expand; yet there is every indication that among many of the finest minds of our race this higher self is becoming atrophied. Should this continue, the future for humanity is indeed dark; for it is a sheer fact, whether we happen to like it or not, that while man can *exist*, he cannot really *live* without religion. He is a homesick animal; and it is only religion that links him with his real home, in God.

So far the discussion has been largely destructive. It has been argued that Infallibilism and Fundamentalism will not avail in our present crisis; and that the older liberal movement gives away those distinctive values of Christianity which must be retained if our religion is to belong to the order of vertebrates. It has been pointed out that the new religions which are showered upon us to-day are ineffectual in our time of need, and sometimes even silly in their irrelevance to the deeper problems of life. What then can the thoughtful man do, if a religion he must have?

Here we are back at our starting point. There *is* a way left, and that is the way of a genuinely liberal Catholicism, which will not only maintain the central truths and values of the historic Catholic tradition of faith and life, but will freely interpret this tradition in the light of modern thought and study, and will fearlessly restate it in terms understandable to men and women of to-day. It is to certain important aspects of that position that attention is invited, in the confident belief that a clear statement of the case for such 'modernist Catholicism' is the best Christian apologetic for our generation.

A few words may be allowed in preface. For many years the development of liberal Catholicism has been progressing in the Anglican Communion; it is in principle the carrying out of ideals implicit in our historic tradition. Those who are in this movement believe that it is quite impossible to shut one's eyes to new truth, quite impossible to disregard new thought-forms; but they also believe that the main-stream of Catholic faith and life holds the essential values of Christianity, and that these must be preserved at all costs. And this is to be done by the working out of an adequate modern theology; not so much by tinkering with the old as by developing a new Catholic theology for the modern age.

What is needed to-day is a truly modernist Catholicism or Catholic modernism, in which a fearless acceptance of modern knowledge is balanced by the authority of the cumulative experience of the Catholic Church. We need—and we are achieving—a *dynamic* conception of Christianity and the Church, as over against a static view of both. There need be no fear of the results of this modernizing trend. The final word on this matter was said by Fr. Wilfred Knox in a paper at the 1930 Anglo-Catholic Congress, when he pointed out that while the Catholic Church, faced with supposedly heretical doctrine or a critical theory which appears to undermine its faith, sometimes appears to be in danger of being led astray, it will in the long run be guided into the truth. But for that guidance the Church 'must have liberty to reconcile new knowledge with old truth'; it must not be 'compelled to the continual attempt to resist to the last ditch every progressive movement of the human mind.'

The native heath of a genuinely modern Catholicism is the Anglican Communion. We may hope and pray that others will see more and more clearly the depth and spaciousness of such a liberal interpretation of Catholic tradition; and it may be that along these lines Christian unity will be secured, by assent to a common faith interpreted in conformity with the best in the thought of our time. But in the Anglican Communion we have all the traditional Catholic values of faith and order, prayer and sacrament; and also a goodly heritage of scholarship and sound learning. The great body of Christians who live under Canterbury can do a notable work in making it possible for modern men and women of good faith to accept in its richness and fulness the Catholic tradition, and to find there the source of new life and power for daily living. Anglicanism is necessarily and by inheritance a liberal Catholicism.

What then are some of the essential points in the modernist Catholic position? Perhaps they may be summarized briefly as follows: Liberal Catholicism stands for the maintenance of the central affirmations of historical Christianity as a religion centreing about the person and work of Jesus Christ as incarnate, risen and ever-living Lord; while at the same time it welcomes all new knowledge from whatever source it may come, and continually seeks to reinterpret the tradition in the light of that knowledge.

It endeavours to combine the freedom of inquiry emphasized by modernism with the historical Catholic faith in God's supremely effectual and definitive self-revelation in Jesus Christ.

To the modern Catholic of the Anglican Communion, Christianity is a growing body of truth, based on the faith that is implicit in the persistent experience of a new life of communion with God mediated by Christ, and imparted to men in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit — that is to say, given in the charismatic community which is informed and guided by Christ Himself. Dogma is thus regarded as a generalization of a persistent experience; and no dogma is of ultimate value which does not safeguard some essential element of that experience. *Lex orandi lex credendi.* To quote Fr. Wilfred Knox once again:

> 'The function of authority in the Church is to formulate and render explicit, where need arises, truths implicit in the spiritual experience of the Christian consciousness.'

A modernist Catholicism values supremely the age-old devotional and sacramental system of the Church; and, truly Catholic in its emphasis, finds in the Eucharist or the Mass the central act of Christian worship. Here there is in some real sense a unique presence of our Lord, so that the consecrated elements may legitimately be called 'the body and blood of Christ' as the instrumental symbols whereby His risen life is communicated to men. In this the Eucharist carries on the Incarnation, as in another sense the Catholic Church continues it, since the Incarnation itself is from one point of view an effective symbol of the divine presence and activity. Not only has the devotional life of the Catholic Church centred around the experienced presence of Christ in 'the sacrament of His love'; the Church has ever seen in the Mass a real sacrifice, the spreading-forth before the Father of the perfect self-oblation on Calvary, with which the believer is united in the mystical Body of Christ. Both are priceless parts of the great Christian religious heritage, and it is only as the Eucharist, with these two emphases, is kept in its central place that the genuine continuity of Christianity can be maintained, for as St. Thomas Aquinas said, 'In this sacrament, the whole mystery of man's salvation is focussed.'

The liberal Catholic would maintain that there is an overwhelming authority behind the fundamental dogmas and devotional practices of Christianity — but it is a free authority, a real

consensus fidelium. It is his deepest conviction that man can never surpass Christ's revelation both of the essential nature of God and the real nature of man; but he does not think that the Incarnation had for one of its purposes the settling of all intellectual and scientific problems in the universe. Consequently he expects the development of Christianity from age to age, without the loss of any of its basic values or distinctive and central beliefs.

To put the point in another way. It might well be asked: Can you honestly affirm, in the face of modern thought and discovery, that in our Lord Jesus Christ men have been given the supreme and definitive revelation of the Divine Nature, so that we may legitimately call Him God-man; that salvation, or what may be called in modern jargon the unification of personality through its proper adjustment to Reality, is really and sufficiently of Him; that the Catholic Church is actually the new divine humanity — *populus qui nascetur quem fecit Dominus*; and that through its sacramental life the Church does make the divine-human Christ available for every age? To all of these questions the modernist Catholic would give an affirmative answer.

He definitely believes that God has given to the world in Christ just such a completely adequate revelation of Himself; he is convinced that the world to-day is perishing because it cannot understand and accept this great fact and drink of the life-giving stream which flows from the Incarnate God and is mediated by the Catholic Church. He sees that where much modern religion has failed is in that it has broken with the essential continuity of Christian faith and experience. When this great heritage has been forgotten, there is nothing left, upon which to build a religion, besides changing emotion, so-called cosmic consciousness, and social enthusiasm. But the burning centre of Christianity remains where it ever was: a fruitful belief in God, given in the Christ who is supreme and unique among all revelations and revealers of Supernatural Reality, and who through His Church still imparts in unparalleled richness the divine life and power.

It is indeed impossible for a genuinely liberal mind to discard the precious heritage of Christian life and faith — this normal religious experience of generations of normal men, as it has been

'clarified, co-ordinated, philosophized by capable men themselves in touch with the common experience of which they treat.' Throughout, the modern Catholic pleads for a humble, but not uncritical, acceptance of the Christian tradition, and a sincere and loyal restatement, for our own age, of that faith and life. He finds his primary authority in the continually growing consensus of saints and scholars and holy and humble men of heart concerning the truth of the Christian religious heritage. He sees the Church as guided by the Holy Spirit, expanding from age to age. When Catholic tradition is understood in that light, we must agree with St. Augustine when he said that he could not believe the Gospel *nisi catholicae me commoveret auctoritas*.

With all his reverence for the great tradition, however, the modern Catholic scholar considers himself entirely free to study the historical problem of Christian origins, or any other relevant critical or scientific question. The right to investigate cannot be refused. All truth, no matter where it may be found, comes from God who is the Truth. We can discuss modern problems of all sorts quite fearlessly, confident of the guidance of the Holy Spirit as men live and work in the divine fellowship of the Catholic Church.

Criticism of the New Testament does not terrify the present-day Catholic, although there must always be a certain tension at this point, as von Hügel said, for any objective historical religion which takes its rise from definite happenings to which a special significance is attached. Some of the most radical criticism of recent years has come from convinced liberal Catholics; but questionings as to the manner in which the divine fire of Christianity came down to earth have been answered long in advance of the asking by the simple fact that the fire has lasted for twenty centuries and is still burning to-day.

It is simply futile for the Christian on the one hand, or the scientific student on the other, to attempt to canalize history. Things are what they are, and they will be what they will be, and it is a waste of time to wish them otherwise. Little enough may be known, with absolute certainty, about the earthly life of our Lord; we have no biographies of Him; our gospels are only portraits done by those who already believed in Him with all their hearts. But it is not through critical study of the gospels, but

through communion with the risen Christ, impressions of whose earthly life are given in those records, that men come to the full faith in Incarnate God. We are not asked to live in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago; we have to do with a living Christ, known in the Church which is His Body.

The Catholic faith will not be destroyed by an accurate knowledge of how it originated — provided that knowledge could be attained. The historian can never settle the ultimate question of the activity of God in human affairs. The faith is transcendent to the records. But at the same time the historicity of the human life of Christ is an invaluable and essential point, for it remains true, both as a matter of fact and as a guarantee of objectivity, that it was through the wounds of His humanity that men came to the intimacy of His divinity. In that single person who is both the historical Jesus and the living Christ of experience, men and women for two thousand years have found Reality supremely and uniquely; He has raised the whole race to a new level. In order to explain both what He has been and what He has done, and to co-ordinate this with the rest of human experience, the Catholic Church has been compelled to develop a doctrine of Christ, and has concluded that He is God-Man, in whom the entrance of Supernatural Reality into the natural world reaches, in man and through man, its implied goal and centre. But this interpretation of Christian experience certainly cannot be proved or disproved from the gospels; it is a matter of faith and life. Its justification is that it makes sense of the earliest traditions, that it is true to present experience, that it illuminates the field of history, and that it throws a new light on all nature and on human life.

Similarly with the Eucharist. Little enough definite teaching on this subject may be found in the New Testament. There are what Schweitzer has suggested may be the 'eschatological meals' of our Lord's ministry, the Last Supper, the apostolic tradition of the breaking of the bread, and the Johannine and Pauline discourses. But because there is a relatively slight historical record on this point, are we to conclude that the whole development of eucharistic faith and practice has been illegitimate? The modern Catholic thinker replies with an emphatic negative. Here, as in the realm of Christological formulation,

the Holy Spirit has guided the Church and has disclosed whole areas of new truth, taking of the things of Christ and declaring them unto us. Even such comparatively recent practices as the adoration of our Lord in the Reserved Sacrament, or the extra-liturgical services of benediction and adoration, are not to be condemned merely because there is no scriptural proof text which may be quoted for them. We expect a constant development of faith and practice; and we do not seek Biblical texts to support these devotional practices. Obviously nothing must be adopted which is clearly contrary to the classic presentation of Christianity found in our earliest records; but the real tests are: Is the practice in accord with the Spirit of Christ? Does it develop Christ-like lives? Does it cohere with the general Catholic tradition of worship?

Certainly we must have a clear historic foundation for our Christian faith and life; but on the basis of that existent faith and life there has come, and will come through the years, the discovery of rich new truth, which in turn will expand our understanding of the basic historical nucleus and its central values for us.

There is another aspect of modern Catholic thought and life of which mention must be made. This concerns what is sometimes called 'social Christianity.' Modern Catholicism, it is felt, must have something to say on the social, economic, industrial and political questions which are perplexing men to-day. Christianity is concerned with the salvation of the whole world-order, not merely with that of individual men, and it has a message which can only find its full expression in a Christian social life. But here Modernists and Catholics are happily in full agreement.

The necessity for doctrinal re-formulation has been mentioned. As an example of the manner in which modernist Catholicism envisages this process, there is no belief more instructive than the Incarnation. This Incarnation fact and doctrine is the heart of Christian faith, and upon it Christianity as a distinctive religion stands or falls. A consideration of the Incarnation therefore will bring out a number of important points in the position which is here defended.

The modern Catholic is firmly convinced of the great central Christian fact. But he regards it not only as the supreme means

by which God has come to men and made them sharers in the Christ-life, but also as the clue to our understanding of the whole cosmic system. Bérulle once said that the Incarnation as a method 'is the condition, the work, and the mystery wherein God reigns, and whereby He reigns, in His creatures.' Regarding our Lord as the central sacrament, liberal Catholicism tends to interpret the universe in terms of a sacramentalism of degrees. The Incarnation is thus brought into the very closest relationship with the whole cosmic process.

In other words, as a result of their refusal to separate the doctrine of Christ from cosmic theology, modern Catholic theologians are more and more coming to envisage the universe as a graded system, which everywhere expresses, in however varied mode and degree, the one eternal and transcendent Reality present and active in the whole creation but in no sense identical with that creation. They find the focus of this process and the crowning manifestation of Reality in Jesus Christ and the community of which He is, in Professor Webb's words, 'the founder and guide,' and which remains as 'the organ and vehicle of His risen life.' Here the Eternal is regarded as having come fully to men in genuine human nature: the Word is made flesh. The Logos has in Christ achieved complete actualization in human terms.

Modern Catholicism finds that in 'all the good realities' of this cosmic system, the Divine Word expresses Himself and is active towards men. If Reality is viewed in the light of the historic Incarnation, the whole world may be understood as the scene of what is legitimately called an incarnation process — a movement which is focussed and fulfilled in Christ. In Him the divine life, ever given to men from above and not to be confused with any merely immanental urge or tendency, has come so richly that it has overflowed, as it were, and lifted the human race to a new level in this many-graded universe. That supervenient level we may call God-in-manhood, or the Christ-life, and of it the Catholic Church and the Catholic tradition of faith and practice, as the extension of Christ's divine-human life, is both the focus and the nucleus. Into it all men are being taken. Our Lord, therefore, is best described (and so the Catholic Church has ever described Him) as God-Man, as human as man, as divine as

God, for in Him the divine self-giving to men comes to its full and concentrated expression.

In the striking words of Dr. D. Miall Edwards, Jesus Christ is

> 'the living meeting-point of heaven and earth, of God and man, the keystone of the cosmic arch, the culmination at once of emergent evolution working "upwards" and of the divine self-impartation working "downwards," at once the summit of human achievement and the supreme gift of love whereby God gives "His very self and essence all divine."'

To sum up the statement: Our Lord Jesus Christ, crowning many partial realizations and adumbrations, is for us men the sufficient disclosure of the essential being of God in terms of humanity. His Incarnation has really effected in this ceaselessly developing world-system the new level of Christ-life. It is inconceivable that He will be surpassed; His revelation, even though, and indeed because, it shows itself capable of infinite growth in every field of activity, has in itself the feel of utter finality. That rich unity, which has at length and once for all been achieved in Christ, and which is continued and expanded in His Church-Body, is, as St. John Damascene said,

> 'a new thing, the newest of all new things, the only really new thing under the sun.'

Christ is a genuine emergent, not a mere resultant; a genuine entrance of God in unprecedented fulness into our little human world; but the whole incarnation process is all of one piece, and here in Him we find its completion and explanation: God becomes man so that man may be raised to full participation in the life of the Godhead.

Modern Catholicism, because of its open and cordial attitude towards all truth old or new, and because of its widening of the incarnation faith, is able and ready to acknowledge the real measure of divine revelation and grace found both in the non-Christian religions and also in every other field of life and experience. On this no one has insisted more vigorously than Baron von Hügel, who with all his deep faith in the unique fulness of our Lord's embodiment of God, yet maintained that in the other religious traditions, and likewise in science, art, philosophy and ethics, God in some way and to some degree has really been known and found. The Christian claim is not that Christ destroys these other manifestations of Divine Reality; the claim is that He fulfils and explains them.

Along these lines, liberal Catholic thought sees in the non-Christian religions themselves a preparation for the perfect Incarnation in Christ and a real though partial disclosure of the Logos who made himself known to us completely in our blessed Lord and His redeeming work. It understands the actual history of religion as what Professor Webb has called 'the story of a single Incarnation of God in humanity, culminating in the life and death of Jesus Christ and in His risen life,' and it believes that the Christian Church has 'the capacity eventually to assimilate and incorporate the whole religious experience of mankind.' The Catholic religion of the future it envisages as based on the central Christian heritage, firmly rooted in history, rich in sacramental worship, open-minded towards all truth no matter where it may be found, and finding in its synthesis a place for the precious revelation of Himself given by God through non-Christian traditions.

Canon Quick has put this point in the following words :

> 'The Christian missionary who finds, even in a primitive or possibly corrupt religion, points of contact with his own faith is not a relativist or a syncretist, tacking together a muddled theology or patchwork; rather he is a disciple who knows so clearly Him whom He has believed, that he can recognize the tokens of His presence in any Nazareth which so-called orthodoxy has despised. The Buddhist's sympathy with the pain of the world, the Hindu's sense of the unchanging stability of the Eternal, the Moslem's realization of international comradeship, the Confucian's appreciation of social morality, and . . . the sacrifices of scientific workers in the quest of truth and of human welfare, give to the Christian a fresh revelation of the Light that lighteth every man, and of the Word made flesh. . . . The Christ is the human Saviour whom men have sought and partially found in the persons of Sakyamuni, Mohammed, Confucius and many another sage and saint, prophet and reformer, who has followed and pointed the way towards the one true God. But the Christ is found fully only in one who is even more than the Christ, because His Cross is proved to be the very wisdom and power of God Himself.'

Thus we may say that when in the Nicene Creed we kneel at the words *and was incarnate*, we are not only acknowledging with profound humility and awe God's condescension in coming to us uniquely and completely in the historic Incarnation in Christ, in whom He has finally effected the new God-in-manhood; but we are also acknowledging with deep reverence all those other divine condescensions and preveniences which have preceded or have followed that particular Incarnation, and of which it is both the criterion and the crown.

God is adequately received and apprehended only through Christ in His Church. No matter what modification or reinterpretation may be required from time to time, the central Catholic tradition remains fundamentally sound in so far as it holds fast to the revelation of God given in Christ and His mystical Body the Church as supreme, adequate and definitive. And this is a revelation which may be expanded and developed to infinity, because it is a revelation of the very heart of God. It is limitless in its range and can assimilate everything that is good and true and beautiful without losing its essential identity, for in a very real sense that identity is Incarnate God Himself.

IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES BASS

An old and very loyal member of the Modern Church's Union, the Rev. Charles Bass, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, died last month. Like many more of our clerical members, he was an efficient pastor. The *Oxford Diocesan Gazette* for April, contains the following appreciation by the Bishop of Buckingham:

> 'There has passed to his Rest, the Rev. C. Bass, Vicar of Steeple Claydon for over thirty years. Though not well known outside his own immediate surroundings, he was a wonderful shepherd to the members of his flock. He took a great interest not only in the important incidents, but also in all the fortuitous circumstances of their lives. The attendance at his funeral was a remarkable testimony to the esteem in which he was held.'

BOOK REVIEWS

TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS*

David Hume declared of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, that it was 'the only system of immortality to which philosophy can lend an ear.' Hume's own philosophy, of course, did not lend an ear to it, but it is interesting to note that he thought there was as much to be said for pre-existence as for survival. The idea that after death souls pass into another body seems to be connected with ordinary animism, and is to be found amongst different races from Greenland to Zululand. The belief, of course, is prominent in the Upanishads. The Pythagoreans and Plato also entertained the theory of transmigration. Both Goethe and Lessing sponsored it a hundred years ago amongst the European intelligentsia.

What about to-day? Dr. Rittelmeyer tells us that 'At the present day the number of people who tell us of impressions of reincarnation is increasing.' Another sign of the times is 'the instinctive impulse which makes

* *Re-incarnation*, by Friedrich Rittelmeyer. The Christian Community Bookshop. 1934. 3/6.

men to-day seek Yoga-exercises, Catholic exercises, American methods of self-training.' This might alternatively be attributed, of course, to the greatly increased interest in the comparatively new science of psychology. Dr. Rittelmeyer's own belief is based, he tells us, on the following grounds: (i) On the ground of his own impressions, he thinks he knows something about a life before birth; (ii) through severe spiritual exercises he has reached a conception of the relationship of body to soul which is in accordance not only with further development in a 'higher world,' but also solely in accordance with reincarnation; (iii) reincarnation has brought the most illuminating fulfilment of his endeavours to find a satisfying view of the world.

Naturally, none of the above reasons would convince the sceptic, who would ask Feuerbach's question, 'Who tells us that the universe really corresponds to our demands and wishes?' Nor, in the present state of physical knowledge, is it easy to comprehend the nature or possibility of 'astral bodies,' and so forth. But those who think that perhaps there may be something in a theory which, after all, has been held by some of the world's supreme religious geniuses, should look into Dr. Rittelmeyer's book, though in no sense can it be described as a systematic treatise.

J. C. HARDWICK.

FREUD AND PREJUDICE*

At the beginning of his chapter on the religious consciousness, Dr. Hughes assures his reader that 'here we shall find ourselves less hampered . . . by the theories of the New Psychologists.' The confession is characteristic. Dr. Hughes seems to be saying 'we should really get along very much more comfortably if there were no such thing as this New Psychology.' He writes all the time on the defensive. One gets the impression that under the bombardment of the Behaviourists and the Psychoanalysts the ark is sinking fast, but that with the author's help we may manage to clutch a few straws to keep our heads above water in the general inundation. For all his insistence that psychology has nothing to do with the ultimate truths, the author remains uneasy. 'When Psychology proceeds to explain religion and draw conclusions about the existence of God . . . it is simply passing out of its province, and we must say to it "Hands off!"' Why? It seems a pity to stop investigation in this abrupt manner; but possibly the New Psychologists will not catch the remark.

We must frankly say that it is to be hoped that no one reading this book will imagine it represents the general attitude of the Church. Its aim is said to be apologetic, and it has more than the usual weaknesses of apologetic writing. Dr. Hughes has read, not to weigh and consider, but to contradict and confute. There is an attitude of superiority, shown in such a phrase as 'more deep and real perhaps than Psychologists have ever dreamed' (p. 51), and this runs all through the book.

One expects the writer of a serious book to treat his opponents fairly. Dr. Hughes does not always manage this. On p. 92 we are told:—

> 'Leuba, in the closing chapter of his book entitled *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism,* looks forward to the time when these ideas of God will disappear from the intellectual world of man, and then the race will live in a purely scientific age, when everything will be regarded as the product of a glorified machine, working with purely mechanistic forces!'

* *The New Psychology and Religious Experience.* T. H. Hughes, M.A., D.Litt., D.D. (Halley Stewart Publications, ii. 1933. Allen & Unwin. 10/6.)

It is difficult to reconcile this with the following two extracts from the chapter referred to, the latter of the two being from the last paragraph in Leuba's book :—

(1) 'The recovery of the churches is to be sought in such a transformation of the idea of God as would make it generally acceptable to modern scientific scholarship. The beneficient forces to-day at cross-purposes in humanity, and mutually destructive, would then find an harmonious expression.'

(2) 'It is not a replacement of the religious spirit by science which is indicated here, but the inclusion into the religions of the relevant scientific knowledge. The hope of humanity lies in a collaboration of religion with science. . . .'

In the same way, Miss Beatrice Hinkle's views are summarized thus (p. 185) :

'. . . man's misery comes from repressing his instinctive tendencies, and . . . if he is to be happy he must live like the animals who obey the promptings of their instincts at every turn.'

Could any competent psychologist write in this way? It is, of course, a ridiculous travesty of Miss Hinkle's position. One begins to suspect that Dr. Hughes has not really understood his psychology. He certainly has not understood the nature of repression, as is shown by his comments on the above passage. He identifies it with self-control, or renunciation. And there are other indications of the same failure. For example, he uses the term Psycho-analysis to cover the quite different systems of Freud, Jung, Adler, and others. Here is another example (p. 120) :—

'Animals are purely creatures of instinct, with power of learning by experience certainly, but it is always by the trial-and-error method.'

The two parts of this statement are mutually contradictory, and probably neither is true.

No attempt is made to think out a consistent logic of psychology and apply it to current religious ideas. What the New Psychologists happen to have said about religion is given far too much attention, while the task of considering how their real contributions to knowledge affect what we ought to say about it is neglected. Further difficulty is caused by the author's failure to make his own religious position at all clear. For example, the special menace of the New Psychology is said to lie in the doubt it throws upon the validity of the religious experience; but what sort of validity we are to allow to what sort of experiences is not explained. It is stated on p. 166 that the New Psychologists 'all affirm that religious experience is an illusion, devoid of reality.' This is not so. No psychologist could deny that religious experiences really exist. What they do deny is that any truths of religion ought to be taken as established merely because they have been revealed in an 'experience,' however impressive that experience may have been. But surely this is nothing new. The attempt to establish religion upon 'religious experience' was declared useless long ago, by Rashdall, for instance. Again in his discussion of conversion the author displays a vacillation between the position that here God intervenes in a crudely supernatural manner, and the position that the 'natural' explanation does not exclude God.

Grateful acknowledgement is made in places to the light psychology has thrown upon religion, but always in such a way that the author remains supreme judge. He concedes what he is prepared to concede, not what a candid examination of the facts leads him to believe must be conceded.

There is no acknowledgment of the immense amount of suffering that has been relieved by psycho-therapy, nor does the author explain how it comes about that so beneficient a force can be a menace to Christianity. The view he himself takes of sin and moral responsibility is a good deal further from Jesus than the view taken by psychologists.

On p. 53 Leuba is said to be 'obsessed by the scientific bias of mind.' If this means anything, it means a bias in favour of truth rather than error, however attractive error may be. A little of this bias would be no bad thing for Christian apologists to cultivate. The question is not, 'Are these doctrines contrary to my Christianity? or even to any possible Christianity?' but, 'Are they true?' Pfister, the Swiss Pastor and Psycho-analyst said in 1913 that the critics of analysis suffered from a fatal disease known as 'ontophobia,' or fear of the facts. One would have hoped that Christianity might have been an antidote for this disease, and have exhibited a courageous acceptance of all honest investigation.

R. J. STANFORD.

SCIENCE, RELIGION AND MAN*

This is a thesis for the Degree of Doctor of Theology which was accepted in 1933 by the University of Strasbourg under the title *L'Homme d'après la Religion et la Science*. Dr. Cornelius is well known to all King's College, London men for the work he has done for the Theological Society, and for his high academic distinctions abroad. This work he has now published will do much to prove that such distinction has been deserved, for considerable labour and study must have gone to the making of it, and time which must have been seized with difficulty from the tasks incidental to a large and poor parish in London.

The book does not claim to do more than present many of the results of modern research in readable and simplified form, and the writer offers it as a useful starting point for leaders of study groups interested in the relations between science and religion. 'The book will be useful above all to those who by reason of shortness of time or opportunity are not easily able to consult large works in the field of modern research.' Dr. Cornelius surveys some of the results of the theory of evolution, holding that the belief 'In the beginning, Mind' is valid and that we may believe in an intelligible God behind an intelligible world. He quotes on p. 50 the statement 'The orthodoxy of the past was based on the Science of the Past: if Science alters and expands so also must the orthodoxy.' The thesis covers a wide area, discussing Man and his relation to the animal creation, and human progress through experiment and experience. Part II examines religion, which the author holds is the 'response to the germ of spiritual enquiry which God implanted in the animal who became primitive man.' Religion arises from our sense of imperfection and failure, and belief in God from Reason, Revelation and Personal Experience. We wonder if Dr. Cornelius is justified in talking about the 'religious instinct' as freely as he seems to do, when he means something better described in other terms. He makes little reference to Psychology, although to write on man in relation to Science must in these days involve a consideration of this modern Science. Dr. Cornelius is very interesting on magic and religion. He follows Hartland in not assigning an earlier date to one over the other, for they are both primitive responses to the mystery of life. He has collected some extraordinary stories of contemporary magic which seem incredible in our time,

* *Science, Religion and Man.* By the Rev. W. J. J. Cornelius, D.Litt., Th.D. (Williams and Norgate. 1934. 15/-.)

and only prove how far the human race still has to go before it begins to be reasonable. Part III is a good survey of the religious quest of mankind, and almost every civilization and the religion which held it together is discussed. Perhaps some reference should have been made to the contribution of Mexico and the Aztecs, and surely Jupiter's wife was never Zuno (p. 284).

Dr. Cornelius lays about him vigorously when he comes to examine some modern heterodoxies. Russellism (the Judge's, not the Earl's variety), Spiritism, Christian Science, Mormonism, Roman Modernism, and Communism are heavily dealt with here. There is an intriguing sentence on p. 327, 'To-day we are presented with the spectacle of materialist Fathers of the Church hobnobbing with research scientists and mystical astronomers.' Who are these 'materialist Fathers,' we wonder? The last chapter is a good discussion on the after life. There is a great deal of useful information in this thesis, and the writer's views are generally progressive and helpful. Many will find it a good up-to-date storehouse of not easily obtained knowledge and information, and congratulate Dr. Cornelius on his Strasbourg success.

MARCUS KNIGHT.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT*

The Master of the Temple has published twelve broadcast talks, given in the summer of 1930; its title, *Politics and Society in the Old Testament,* does not sufficiently indicate its wide range. After an opening chapter on the characteristics of the Semites and their earliest records, the history of the Hebrews, from Sinai to the return from Exile, is outlined in eight chapters, in the course of which their ethical tradition is clearly brought out. The three concluding chapters are on Jonah—an excellent appreciation of that much misunderstood story,— on the Psalms, and on the Wisdom Literature. The whole forms an admirable introduction to the Old Testament for those ignorant of the light which research has shed on the story, and it is characterised by the happy combination of unobtrusive scholarship and popular exposition. It is a pleasure to know such talks were broadcast and an advantage to have them cheaply available in print.

H. G. MULLINER.

CORRESPONDENCE

DISINTERESTED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

SIR, To the Editor of the *Modern Churchman.*

Having read Mr. Hardwick's extremely interesting letter in your March issue, I should be grateful for an opportunity for a further reply.

While appreciating the distinction made by Mr. Hardwick between scientists as individuals, and scientific research in general, I still think that he is wrong in some of his contentions, as I shall endeavour to show.

First of all I would warn Mr. Hardwick against paying too much attention to Professor Huxley when he interludes his remarks with 'I should say 's and 'about 's. A careful reading of the quotation given by Mr. Hardwick, shows that it consists of a penn'orth of facts to six penn'orth of

* *Politics and Society in the Old Testament.* By the Reverend S. C. Carpenter, B.D. (Williams & Norgate. 1931. 3/6.)

guesswork. The only *figures* available are Government Grants, and a few from public companies. These do not constitute the whole, and the private moneys expended are absolutely unknown.

However, the two points under discussion seem to be, (*a*) Why do chemical and physical research flourish, while psychological and sociological research languish? and (*b*) Why are chemical and physical research devoted to military and war making investigation? I would answer these questions as follows :—

(*a*) As Mr. Hardwick very truly remarks, prior to Dalton chemistry was not an exact science. Exactly. Prior to Dalton chemistry was not science at all. What is more, prior to Dalton the number of research workers in chemistry was very small indeed, because only men of outstanding intellect could hope to accomplish anything. But given the atomic theory, the molecular theory, and later, the Gas Laws, the field was opened to the average man. We had some tools with which to work, some standards whereto we could compare results, analysis became possible, and (and this is the crux of the matter) the man of genius could delegate immense amounts of routine work to those of lesser calibre.

Now neither chemistry nor physics are simple subjects, but psychology is infinitely more complex than either, and it has not found its Dalton. I cannot agree that it 'is rapidly becoming an exact science.' It has no units of measurement, and no standards. Take the work published on this subject, strip it of its technical language, its 'norms,' complexes,' 'behaviourism' (what a word), etc. ; and what is there in it that has not been known empirically for ages?

A scientific theory, to be of value, must be based on thousands of experiments under all possible conditions, with endless repetition, so that coincidence is ruled out. In chemistry and physics, dealing with matter and forces, this is very difficult, how much more difficult is it then in the case of psychology, where raw material consists of men, each one of whom is highly complex?

The chief reason why chemical and physical research flourish is because, although men of genius are as scarce as ever they were, the few who are with us can accomplish immense amounts of work through the assistance of trained helpers. In psychology, however, the man of genius must work alone, because he has no tools to offer to lesser mortals.

(*b*) The answer to this is that they are not. Let me give an example. A chemist once discovered a greenish yellow gas, which he called chlorine. It was found that this gas was a powerful bleaching agent and a powerful germicide. Combined with slaked lime it formed a material known as bleaching powder, and was widely used in the textile and paper industries. Indirectly it was the means of introducing new colour and beauty into the world.

During the late War it occurred to the German High Command that the gas would not only kill germs and bleach colours, it would, if breathed in sufficient quantity, kill men. Hence poison gas.

To-day I.C.I. are manufacturing enormous quantities of chlorine. To kill men? No—to purify water supplies—that is, to help to protect men's lives.

Again, chemists and physicists have evolved the processes for the manufacture of synthetic dyestuffs. It so happens that a dye producing plant can be easily converted to the manufacture of high explosives. Is the chemist then to blame? Must he refrain from producing new colours?

During the years 1914-18 thousands of clergymen, throughout this and other countries, urged their fellow men to go to a hideous death on the battlefield. Shall I then say that a clergyman is, *ipso facto*, a sadistic monster?

The job of a scientist is to produce new knowledge, to add to the world's store of facts. Is he to blame if mankind turns his gifts to base uses? Our work is concerned with man's material welfare, and we can look to our record with pride. We have given to mankind pure food, a longer expectation of life, a higher standard of living, increased leisure, and immense conveniences and comforts. The uses to which he puts those things depend upon his spiritual nature, and that is the concern of the Church.

Those of us who are sane do not blame the Church for man's shortcomings in this respect, we realise the difficulties, but we face the future without fear, and with high hope.

W. S. PAYNE.

The Laurels, Brades Road,
Brades Village, Clelbury.

ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?

SIR,

You touch on p. 716 of the *Modern Churchman* on the widespread superstition (for I can call it nothing else), that the last heard words of Saints should be specially characteristic or revealing. Whereas, a person in the agony of death is likely to be so enfeebled or tortured that no true synthesis of his philosophy or convictions is likely to come to expression then. If his pain or weakness allows a spoken thought to emerge, its utterance is likely to be impeded by a sort of impatience.

I would venture to apply this to Mk. xv, 34.

(*a*) In the first place the saying *Eloi, Eloi,* is most valuable to us, in that a cry of despair (or what sounds like it) is not likely to have been invented by believers. St. Mark's tale of the last moments of Jesus may be painful reading for Christians, but it does not sound like a romance.

St. Luke, as I take it, *substituted* Psalm xxxi, 5, for *Eloi, Eloi,* as being more edifying, at least for Gentiles.

(*b*) *Eloi, Eloi, lema . . .*, as you say on p. 711, is an Old Testament citation (modelled on one) and it does sound despairing. Calvin's explanation may be abhorrent to our sense of the kindness of God, but not to human nature. On the other hand the explanation which you put into the mouth of 'the modern secularist' seems to me over-logical. Jesus despaired: yes, at that moment. But that does not mean rejection of the course He had undertaken. It does not mean that if He were given a life over again He would have run away into obscurity at Gethsemane.

(*c*) The various readings of the cry seem to me really significant, something more than efforts of scribes to re-translate Psalm xxii, 1. I am not satisfied with *sabachthani*. How did the best Old Latin (*k*) come to agree with Codex Bezae in Εἰσ τί ὠνείδισάσ με; Must not 'Why didst Thou put me to shame?' be original? Are not *sabachthani* and *azaphthani* attempts to give a Biblical flavour to the bitter cry? I am inclined to say the same of Ἐλωί, for Ἠλεί is nearer Ἠλείαν.

(*d*) It is most important, when mythical theories of the Gospel tale are being discussed, to remember that the shocking incident of this pathetic cry is the earliest story of the death of Jesus that we possess. If we only had the tales in Luke and John we should have been told the Christians knew nothing about their Lord's death and that the whole narrative of the

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Crucifixion was based on hearsay and conjecture. If Mark had been unearthed for the first time at Oxyrhynchus how would the Christian world have treated this story? It is only familiarity that lets us read it unmoved.

F. C. BURKITT.

1 West Road,
Cambridge.

SIR,

The words translated 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me,' I have been informed, could, with a very slight alteration in the Aramaic, be translated 'My God, my God, how hast Thou glorified me.' Those who attain martyrdom are sustained by a divine ecstasy which lifts the spirit above the sufferings of the flesh.

ISABEL SLADE.

Mallards Court, Stokenchurch,
High Wycombe.
March 19th, 1934.

[Professor Burkitt, whom we consulted about this suggested variant, regarded it as incredible that if it had been the original text it could have been altered into 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me.' He stated that it was quite correct that a slight alteration in the Aramaic would provide the rendering given by our correspondent, and he pointed out that possibly this rendering is the source of John xii, 27, 28.—ED., *M.C.*]

SIR,

There is yet another possible explanation.

The hero of the 22nd Psalm was suffering great pain, and thought that he was about to die. He did not want to die. He reflected that God had always been the source of his life. 'I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly.' Why should his God be so far off now?

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?
Why art Thou so far from helping me,
And from the words of my roaring?

To the Hebrews life was one. It was physical and spiritual, but it was one. Death was never a desirable thing. 'If a man die, shall he live?' (Job xiv, 14). Thus if a Hebrew felt that he might die of thirst, he 'thirsted' for the God of life. 'My soul is athirst for God, the living God.' He would complain unto his God, 'Why hast Thou forgotten me?'

The wonder of Jesus is that the prospect of crucifixion did not break His spirit. He held His peace before Pilate, knowing that His silence was sealing His doom. Pilate was staggered. But Jesus was happy, knowing that He was vindicating the power of the Christ of God in the sight both of Caiaphas and of Pilate. He wanted no tears to be shed for Him. 'Weep not for me.' He refused the wine mingled with myrrh. The people had never seen such a thing before. They watched Him on the cross with curious eyes. It was marvellous. And when He uttered the cry, which meant that He still wanted to live, one ran and filled a sponge with vinegar that He might be revived. Others thought that He was calling on Elijah. But all wanted Him kept alive to see what would happen. Then He died, and a Centurion said what he did say. It meant 'This is the most wonderful man I have ever seen.'

The story of His end came to the knowledge of the Church, and it has been preserved by Matthew and Mark. But its essential meaning is to be found in the Fourth Gospel. 'Jesus saith, I thirst,' or in the words of the Scripture, 'My soul is athirst for God, the living God.' And the faith of the Church is that the thirst of Jesus was assuaged.

A. J. WALKER.

Staplehurst Rectory, Kent.
March 28th, 1934.

SIR,

Is there not another interpretation of these words?

Our Lord was absolutely convinced that His Cause was God's cause, and so it was: He expected that God would intervene in its behalf once and for all: the event showed that it was not so to be. When He saw that His adherents in Galilee had fallen away, He determined to put the cause to the test at Jerusalem, and began with an act of violence in the Temple. After three days He saw that here too His adherents had fallen away: at Gethsemane He prayed that even then, at the eleventh hour, His Father would, 'if it were possible, let the cup pass from Him' and intervene. On the Cross He realised that His way was not God's way, and in agony of disappointment He uttered the heart-rending cry of the Psalmist, lamenting not Himself, but the lost cause, as He deemed it. 'He bowed the head and gave up the ghost.' Next minute He knew. It was His expectation, not the cause, which had failed and the Resurrection followed inevitably.

Chichester. C. GORDON WRIGHT.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

SIR,

I have but lately been introduced to your magazine through reading Professor Percy Gardner's 'Modernism in the Church of England,' and am therefore only a very new member of your Union. But '*quand même*' may I venture to offer a brief comment upon two articles in your February number?

1. 'Signs of the Times,' p. 639. Dr. Fosdick gives 'Four Ways in which a Modern Man may know his Bible.' Having for many years tried all four ways, I submit that they give no real knowledge of the Bible. Christ teaches in John vii, 17 that initiation into Spiritual Knowledge depends upon the will rather than the intellect. To interpret this saying in terms of morality will obscure its meaning by reducing it to a common standard of ethics, but if it be read contemplatively in the light of all His Teaching, there emerges an illuminating truth on the right use of both the intellect and the will in the study of the Bible, as the revelation of the Nature and the Will of God. The adult equivalent of that childlikeness, which is the essential qualification for entrance into the Kingdom of the Spirit would be the surrender of the will and of all the accumulated riches of preconceived ideas, in order that mind and heart and soul and body might receive in Contemplative Silence the true meaning of the Bible. The Divine Mind, in seeking to communicate Itself to man uses human language, but puts a new content of divine meaning into the familiar words, which meaning can only be received by renouncement of human connotations. This is illustrated in Christ's efforts to make his opponents 'hear' His Words, and it is the most significant fact that even His devoted disciples could not understand their own Scriptures until He had 'opened their minds.' No-one who has not fairly tried all the four ways named by Dr. Fosdick and abandoned them for the way of Contemplative Silence can estimate the difference, not of degree, but of kind, in the knowledge gained.

2. 'Christ as Logos' (4). The first three sentences of this paragraph are beyond question to any reasonable mind, but the fourth and last, that 'the fourth Gospel . . . knows nothing of the Virgin Birth,' is an amazing statement in view of John i, 12, 13, and John iii, 3—8, which reveal the mystery of the Virgin Birth as the divinely ordained experience for every soul that will receive it. The miracle given as 'fact' by the Synoptics is interpreted by St. John as the even greater miracle of 'birth from above,' of the Spirit, of which the Incarnation is the 'sign' and pledge for every man.

A. M. CURTIS.
(*Warden of the Household of Faith.*)

Community House,
Burton Bradstock,
Bridport, Dorset.
March 22nd, 1934.

SIR, LITURGICAL EXPERIMENT.

I was struck by the very interesting letter of the Rev. A. T. Woodman Dowding. Might I suggest that the Natural Seasons should be made more use of in the Church's year? I think we miss much in not making more prominent the rôle of God as Creator in our religion. Winter is perhaps best celebrated at Christmas as the Festival of the Home; but I should make Easter more of a Festival of Spring, during which we celebrated the re-birth of nature as a whole. Summer with its wealth of flowers, its scenery, holidays and all the blessings that are associated with it, should have its own appropriate thanks.

We are too prone to take things for granted. Religion should be brought more in contact with real life. So far as Autumn is concerned, the Harvest Festival is already the best attended festival of the whole year, not excepting Christmas and Easter!

M. L. S. MISSEN.

Edinburgh.
March 30th, 1934.

SIR, MODERNIST CONFERENCE AT HODDESDEN.

I shall be grateful if you will allow me to call the attention of your readers to the Week-End Conference to be held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, from May 5th to 7th, on *The Gospel of Modernism.*

The papers and speakers are as follows:—

The Modernist Approach to Religion. The Rev. E. P. Boys-Smith, M.A., R.D.

The Idea of God. A. H. Self, Esq., B.A., B.Sc., B.D.

Modernism and the Person of Jesus. The Rev. R. D. Richardson, M.A., B.Litt.

Modernism in Worship and Life. The Rev. H. J. Trueman, M.A.

The cost of the Week-End will be 17/-.

Further particulars can be obtained from the M.C.U. Office.

T. J. WOOD.

The Church House,
Westminster,
London, S.W.1.

[We regret that pressure on our space has precluded us from publishing all the correspondence.—ED., *M.C.*]